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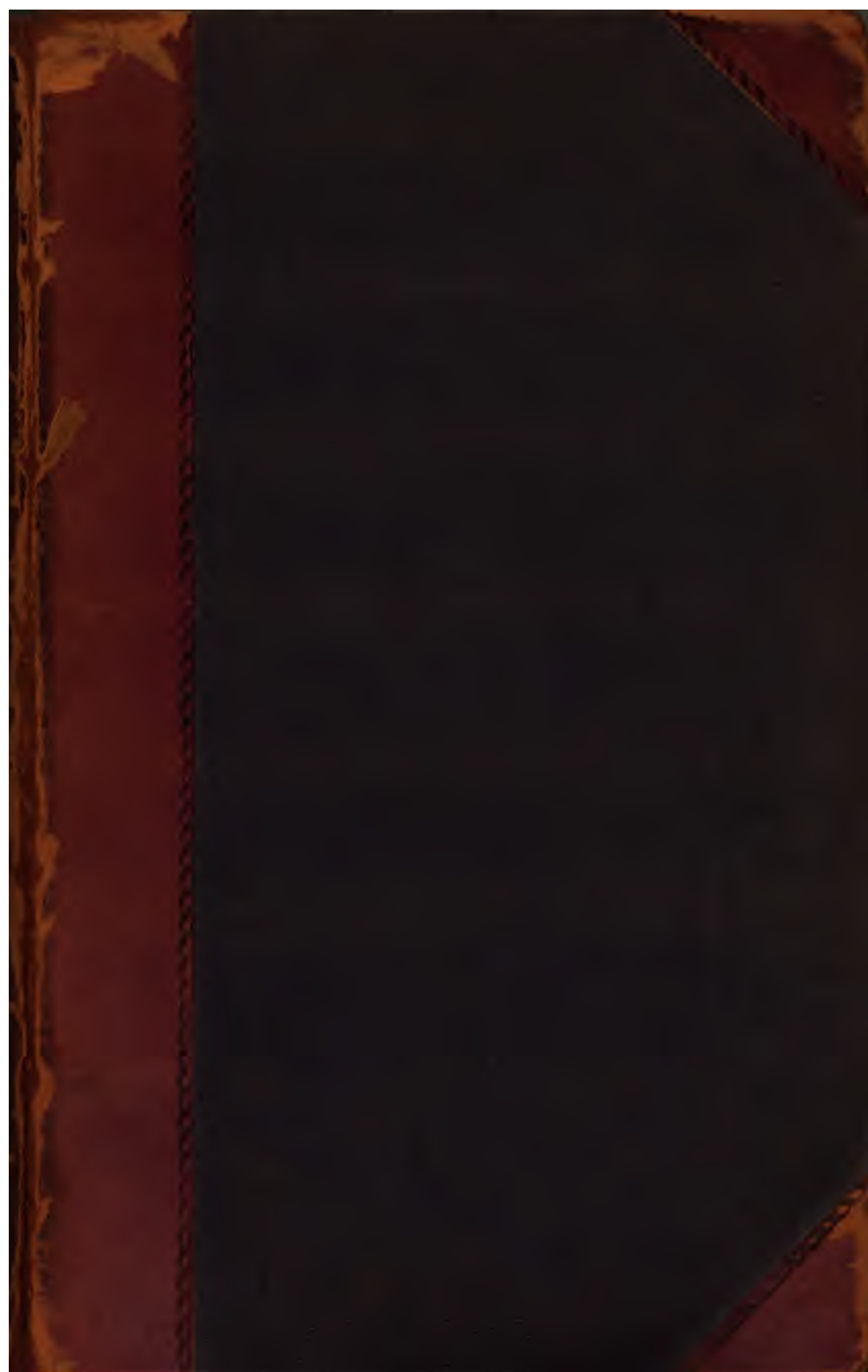
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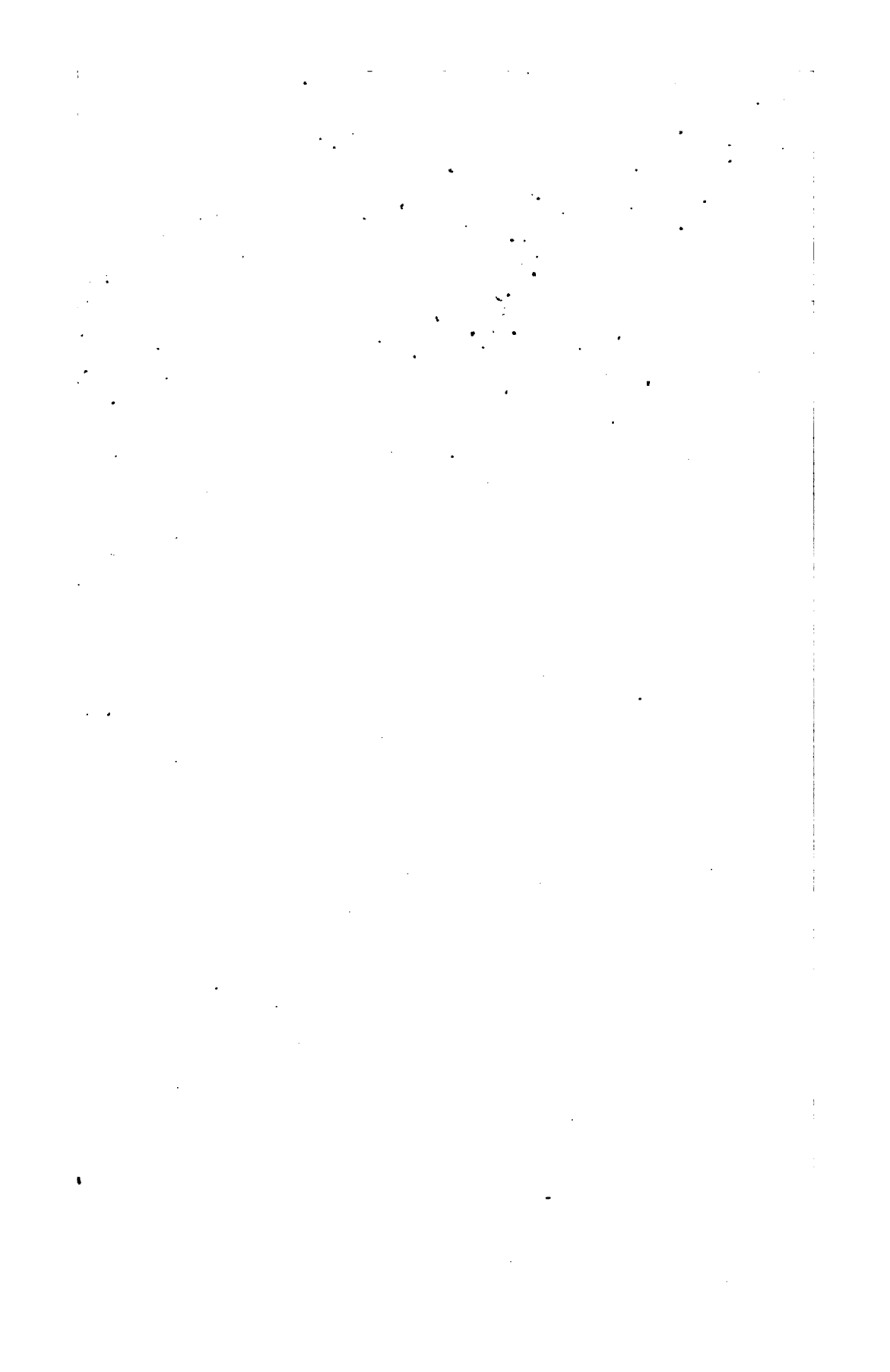


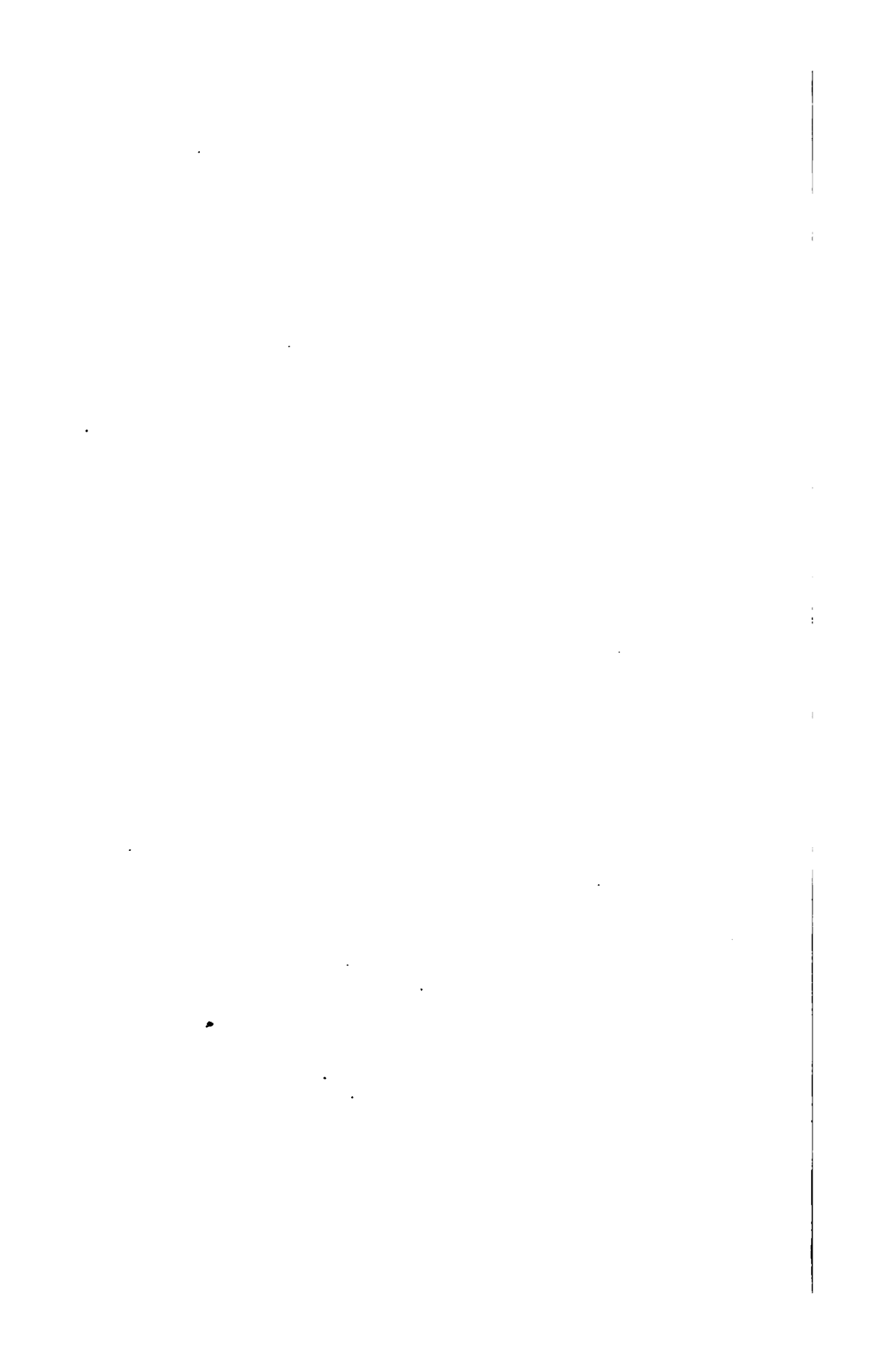
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LETTERS OF A REPRESENTATIVE

TO HIS CONSTITUENTS,

DURING THE SESSION OF 1836.

To which is added

A RUNNING COMMENTARY ON ANTI-COMMERCIAL FALLACIES,

Reprinted from the *Spectator* of 1834.

WITH ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS.

LONDON: EFFINGHAM WILSON, ROYAL EXCHANGE.

THOMAS CURSON HANBARD, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1836.

232 . e . 433 .

To the Liberals of all denominations,
in
KINGSTON UPON HULL;

by their affectionate friend and townsman,

T. PERRONET THOMPSON.

PREFACE.

The LETTERS which follow, were written in discharge of an engagement volunteered in the earliest period of candidateship.

To the constituency concerned, they conveyed a tolerably complete account of the conduct of their representative ; being forwarded generally twice a week, and published in each of two local newspapers.

With the public they will possibly possess some interest, as a record of parliamentary proceedings set down upon the instant.

As exercises in Political Economy, particularly on

PREFACE.

questions of Free Trade, portions of them may be found worth notice by the industrious classes.

The connexion with this part of the subject, led to the reprint of a **RUNNING COMMENTARY** on the anti-commercial fallacies of the day, kept up weekly in the *Spectator* London journal during the interval between the 15th of February and 28th of June, 1834.

London, 31 Oct. 1836.

Letters of a Representative to his Constituents.

**TO THE SECRETARY OF THE HULL
REFORM ASSOCIATION.**

House of Commons, 4 Feb. 1836. 2½ P.M.

SIR,

I HAVE just heard the King's Speech; and as there were some unusual circumstances attending its delivery, you will perhaps be interested in receiving my account upon the spot, for the purpose of comparing it with any others that may be given. In consequence of the total absence of accommodation for the Members of the House of Commons beyond what is afforded to the crush outside the rail at an Assize, and my being as you know like Zaccheus short of stature, it was vain for me to attempt to *see* anything at a lower elevation than the tops of the Peeresses' feathers in the galleries. But I heard the King read, in a slow, distinct, old-gentlemanly voice, with something of the sonorous tone that is acquired by reading in a Cathedral. He frequently hesitated, in the manner of one who sees imperfectly what he is to read; and the place, in spite of the hour, was considerably obscure. On arriving at the conclusion of the Speech, the King said, with great plainness and simplicity, and in the same voice and manner as before, "I am afraid, my Lords and Gentlemen, I have not been able to read the Speech in a manner that claimed your attention; and therefore I will read it to you again." Whereupon, a candle having as I am told been brought and held before him, he read the Speech again, with great clearness, and much less of hesitation than before. The effect on the whole was striking; and exceedingly favourable to the feeling of personal attachment, in which the strength of monarchy so extensively resides. The reading was not once interrupted by cough; and I heard some of the by-standers say, it was frequently interrupted from that cause on the last occasion. Little as our trade at Hull lies in flattering monarchs, I apprehend there are few, in the actual situation of the country, who would wish the King's coughs to last.

I am, SIR, your obedient servant,
T. PERRONET THOMPSON.

London, 5 Feb. 1836.

MINISTERS, after all the boasts and whipping-up of their opponents, were last night in a majority of 41 on the Address. I suspect this may be considered as the turning-point of the game; and that we have only to hold together, to make as complete a clearance of abuses as heart can desire. In particular, I have lively hopes that we shall end in seeing Hull restored to trade, by the removal of the prohibition of commerce by Act of Parliament; and that your agriculturists of the middle classes will have the chance of seeing their sons rise to wealth by the exercise of foreign traffic, as you know was eminently exemplified in the case of my own father. The speech of the seconder of the Address, which must undoubtedly in some sort be considered as the declaration of the Ministers, will be found to contain strong allusions in this direction.

After the mover and seconder, Sir Robert Peel opened the debate. His manner struck me as unwontedly feeble; so much so as to suggest the idea that he was suffering under some physical infirmity. He appeared to be tossed upon a sea of doubt, between an intense desire to avoid an Amendment, and an irrepressible wish to be the mover of one himself. As I was informed, (for I did not at the instant notice it myself), some communication was made to him, which had the effect of composing the struggle in his mind; and his ideas arranged themselves collectedly in favour of an Amendment. The calculation of times and distances suggests, that the purport of the communication was that an Amendment had just passed the Lords, agreeing word for word with that afterwards proposed by the orator.

Lord John Russell replied with firmness; and others of the ministers followed. On the whole, however, the debate went on languidly, till taken up by the member for St. Alban's (Mr. Ward), who for the first time infused some spirit into the proceedings. O'Connell's concluding speech was superb. He began evidently under the effects of agitation, arising from some remarks which might probably as well have been dispensed with, directed to him from the Treasury bench. But when he cooled down into self-possession, he broke into one of those floods of eloquence with which a great actor sometimes astonishes an audience, though in the latter case there is the difference, that the subject matter has been prepared beforehand and in print for ages. One Irish point with which he varied the scene, amused the House much, and seems to have been missed by the reporters. Speaking of the Corporation of Dublin, who with an income of 28,000*l.* a-year spend 30,000*l.*, he said,

that for all this they were in such want of money for all reasonable purposes, that "even if a man's picture was put up in their Hall, *they left him punctually to pay for it.*" I am also not certain whether the reporters have noticed the part in which he expressed his hope, that if Ministers were in a minority they would immediately dissolve Parliament; a passage which was loudly cheered by such members as do not live in fear of meeting their constituents. On the whole I felt proud of my townsmen, for the tact and spirit they have evinced in discovering the connexion between the Liberator of Ireland and the progress of everything which honest and intelligent men in England hope for*.

On one subject arising out of the King's Speech, I should be glad, as the Quakers say, to have *friends' opinions*. An increase of the Navy estimates was mentioned; and the understanding is, that Ministers are to ask for an addition of five thousand seamen. One boast of arbitrary governments is, that they are not obliged to explain their operations inconveniently; the friends of a free government, therefore, should not be too urgent with their questions. It is sufficient for us, if we think the augmentation generally prudent. For my own part, I cannot help saying, that when I consider the following facts,—

1st, That all reasonable men, out of the camp of our enemies,—who of course have an interest in concealing and denying it to the utmost of their ability,—believe there is a powerful faction in the country actively engaged in a plan for changing the succession to the Throne, in favour of arbitrary principles.

2ndly, That we know and have the evidence, that the Army has been tampered with; and in fact the individuals who were the agents in it, advance no excuse except the trumpery one (which I leave you to judge how far it would serve you, or me, or any President of a Reform Association, if we broke the law), that they really did not know what it was they put their hands to.

3rdly, That close and personal communications have been carried on with the assemblage of arbitrary sovereigns in camp at Kalisch; and that the same active and powerful party are carrying on a war of extermination against our brothers and countrymen serving in compliance with the desire of their Sovereign in Spain; hounding on a sanguinary outlaw there to the "deliberate murder," as expressed in writing by the King's Minister for Foreign Affairs, of such of their fellow-citizens as

* The liberal papers at Hull, already contained indications of some public demonstration in this direction.

may fall into his power; corresponding with the King's enemy through their gazettes, and debauching the enlisted soldiers of the General there commanding, to act as spies for the Spanish Pretender, and communicate with him through the instrumentality of his friends and supporters in England;—in all which they seem to me to come as near to levying war against the King, as a steer is to a bullock, and in fact give us an express image of the kind of war they hope to wage at home.

When, I say, I consider all these things, and the immense importance it is of, to cut off the remotest chance of these designs being backed by any co-operation of foreigners, I can see no extravagance in securing ourselves by an increase of five thousand seamen at home. How you would look some morning, if you found a fleet with fifty thousand men from Cronstadt in White-Booth Roads, yourselves best know. The probability of it may not be very immediate; but neither is the scale of preparation inordinate. The blame of the whole must be thrown on such of those who are unfortunately our countrymen, as are at the bottom of the necessity. For my own part I am bound firmly to believe, that those who uphold the murder of British soldiers in Spain, would not stick a moment at bringing a Russian to upset, for instance, your Municipal Corporation Reform. There is nothing like a reasonable care and caution, and shutting the stable door before the horse is stolen. I shall be glad, therefore, if on this subject you would collect opinions.

London, 10 Feb. 1836.

A VERY important question was broached in the House of Commons last night,—the ministerial plan for the Commutation of Tithes in England and Wales. It may not strike you how this is immediately interesting to a commercial community like ours; though I think it may be proved to be so to an extent not easily described. But as there would hardly be time to complete the subject by the present post, I will content myself to-day with the demonstration that I have not been inattentive to your interests in this matter.

I regret that through a defect in our arrangements, I was not present to support the Petition of the Lath-renders; but my colleague informs me there could have been nothing done but to say "I second the Petition." There will probably be an opportunity soon, for putting forward the case of the Lath-renders, in a way that may render them more service than the utterance of the words aforesaid.

London, 10 Feb. 1836.

THE Ministers last night opened their plan for the Commutation of Tithes in England and Wales. On the first essential point,—that of the Commutation being (with a certain drawback to be hereafter mentioned) perpetual, or to be made once for all, to endure *in secula seculorum*,—the Government appear to be right at last. Their proposal will make a clean sweep of the evils which Tithes inflict on the country by repressing its production; to say nothing of the evils of levying a tax in the *most* irritating way instead of the *least*. For this (and I wish it had not a fearful drawback, as was intimated) let us remember we owe gratitude to the Whigs.

The first objection to the plan as I understand it, (and I depend principally on the sort of abstract contained in the leader of the *Morning Chronicle* of the 10th January, which may probably be considered as possessing something like official authority),—is, that it appears to be marvellously unfair to the Church. You will ask me how long it is since I have become a stickler for that establishment, and why. I will tell you. It is because Providence has so ordered things in this world, that there is no committing a wrong or a hard action on any class in society, without its coming round in the shape of punishment to the classes that permit it, either through the direct agency of the injured classes, or through the absence of their assistance at a time when we might otherwise have had it. This is a problem which some people can see, and some people cannot see; and those who see it are “the wise virgins,” and the others “the foolish.”

Nothing can be more undeniable, than that the property of the Church is as much public property, as the property of the Colonels of the Life Guards in their regiments. The Church is not stones, but men; and so are the Colonels in the Life Guards. It is, therefore, just as much matter of arrangement by the community through the organ of their government, whether there shall be twenty bishoprics, or ten, or none, and whether their pay shall be so and so, or not,—as whether there shall be three regiments of Life and Horse Guards or only two, and what shall at any time be the pay of the functionaries that command them. In both cases a decent regard is to be had for existing interests; neither the colonel nor the bishop is to be turned into the streets; but neither of them has any claim to demand the existence of future bishops or colonels, except to the precise extent the country may think it wants their services.

Neither would I at all “shy” the fact, that a time must

come, and that speedily, when either a distribution of the property assigned by the State for religious purposes must be made fairly among all sects, or (which is much the readier process of the two) the property now assigned to the Church must be resumed by the State, and applied to diminish the taxes of you, and me, and everybody,—leaving each and every of us to pay religious teachers for ourselves, as the unfairly treated sects are obliged to do at present. On either of these points I should be sorry to be misunderstood. But I would not, therefore, in effecting a Commutation of Tithes, attempt to take the fragment of a farthing from the clergy by a side wind. When the question comes, let it be fairly met without disguise; and the clergy will be nothing the stronger for having been candidly treated before. Among other reasons also, is one which was urged with great force last night by Mr. Whittle Harvey; namely, that if anything is taken from the Church in the present state of the question, especially from the working members, the only consequence will be that a demand will be made upon our pockets to replace it. In this way, it is pretty plain, that to allow the landlords,—who are the opposing interest, and the ruling power in the State as unfortunately left to us by the age of dishonest corruption which is just passed,—to take anything at the Church's expense, is exactly the same thing as giving it to them ourselves.

The proposal of the Ministerial bill appears to be, that after professing to try various modes of allowing the parties interested to agree voluntarily, if at the end of six months no agreement takes place, then any landholder, or tithe-owner, may call on the Commissioners to make a general award as to the amount of tithes in the parish, and the tithes as paid for seven years, with the charges of all kinds, are then to be ascertained; that if the sum actually received for the seven years shall be ascertained to have been *above 75 per cent* of the gross value, then the amount to be paid in future shall be declared by the Commissioners *to be 75 per cent of that value, and no more*; and if the tithe received was less than 60 per cent of the gross value, then the amount to be increased to sixty per cent; and where the tithe received has been between 60 and 75 ~~per~~ cent of the gross value, then the amount shall be taken unaltered.

Now, what I want to know upon this, is, why if the clergyman shall be found to have been in the habit of receiving 80, 90, or 100 per cent of his legal rights, the alteration is to be to 75 per cent. Why not to 125? If that was proposed, we know what the landlords would immediately say;—"Why are we to pay 125, when the legal claim is only for 100?" Parody that for the

clergy, and ask, "Why are they to receive only 75, when their legal receipts have been 80, 90, or 100?" The reason of the proposal is simply this,—that the landlords are the overwhelming power in the State, and have been so since the Norman Conquest; that it is part of the Norman slavery, and we must all submit to it till we are strong enough to cast it off; that they have got possession of the avenues to justice and to law, and allow no man to partake in the making of laws for you, who does not take an oath that he has a direct pecuniary interest in doing wrong to you and all the rest of the community. I was obliged to take that oath when I became your representative; and I would have sunk into the earth sooner than have done anything so personally dishonest and degrading, if I had not been supported by a strong consciousness that I came there to do my endeavour towards blowing up the conspiracy, by the best means that are actually within our reach. It is therefore perhaps undeniable, that they will have something from everybody, and something from the clergy among the rest. No good of any kind can be got, without paying something as a sop to those who have got the avenues to law into their hands. Our case is like that of a negro slave who bargains with his owner for the terms on which he shall be permitted to work for himself; we have no more chance, at the present moment, of doing anything except by sufferance. I would therefore advise the clergy to yield like other men, and pay *something*. But I submit that 25 per cent is too much. I advise them to try to modify it; and to endeavour to get the other classes of the community to join with them in resisting, by the promise of assistance in return. Tell our friends,—the country ones in particular,—to ask their clergyman if he does not think 25 per cent is too much;—if he can give any reason why 25 per cent is not too much;—and if he cannot, then if he can give any reason why it should not be attempted to be reduced. It is useless to talk of voluntary agreement; no man will get a fair price voluntarily, where it is known he can be robbed of 25 per cent by law.

But, here I come to a point in comparison of which the other sinks into insignificance. The commutation of Tithes is to be permanent—as I said, with a drawback. And how is it to be permanent? What think you of a permanent commutation into a *corn rent*? Yes,—the tithe is to be commuted, not into a permanent payment in money, but into a permanent payment of so many quarters of corn or the value thereof. And what is the effect of this? Manifestly to attach the interests of the clergy for ever and for ever to the conservation of the Corn

Laws. A clergyman is to receive annually the value of, say 100 quarters of corn. If corn is at 80 shillings a quarter, he is to have 400*l.* a-year; and if it is at 20 shillings, he is to have 100*l.* But perhaps somebody will say, this is only making the substantial value of the clergyman's income permanent, or the same under all variations of the price of corn. No, simpleton, it is not; it is giving him a great deal more when corn is dear, and a great deal less when it is cheap. It makes it all the same to him, *with respect to that portion of his income which he expends on corn*; but with respect to all the rest, it makes him partake in the great plot to pillage every industry in the country for the benefit of the owners of rent of land. If the clergyman when he has 400*l.* a-year spends 100*l.* of it upon bread or agricultural produce, he gets exactly the same bread which he would for 25*l.* when corn was a quarter the price and his income 100*l.* But for the remaining 300*l.* does he get no more than he would get under the other circumstances for the 75*l.*? Is it not plain that he receives just the same advantage as any other corn-lord?—in other words, that he has the same interest in keeping up the pillage of the commercial and manufacturing community? Do the wages of industry and the price of manufactured goods rise fourfold, when corn rises fourfold? If they did, what temptation would there be to the landlords to maintain the Corn Laws? It is because they do *not* rise in the same proportion, that the landlords persist in their iniquity, and that Hull must be half a Hull, till we can muster sense, and spirit, and union, to bring them to a composition.

I want to ask the Clergy what will become of them, if this bill goes on, and *after all* the people succeed in putting down the Corn Laws. Robinson Crusoe stowed his gunpowder, some in one place and some in another, in order that at all events it should not be all blown up at once. Had not the clergy better do something of the same kind? Had not they better beg the ministry to give them an income that shall be exposed to no chance or change, from the Corn Laws being altered or from their being not? The Bishops are able men many of them, and capital mathematicians; I wonder they cannot see into this brief piece of algebra.

I should have thought the Government too, would have had strong reasons for not throwing itself into the arms of either of the two parties, which when things have a little settled will be found to be the two really conflicting parties left in this country,—the *dishonest* agriculturists, and those who, with the help of the *honest* ones, mean to bring them to submit to reason. Why had not they the genius, if not the justice, at least to strike the

balance in this instance fairly between the two? Half to the honest men and half to their opponents, is certainly not a very hard bargain. But you will ask me how this is to be done. By the simple measure of lodging the income of the clergy proceeding from the commutation of the Tithe, *half in corn and half in the public funds* or some other mode of making a fixed money payment. In this manner the clergy will be balanced between both events; it will be indifferent to them, in the main, whether the Corn Laws are continued or are not. If they are continued, then the receipts of the clergy from each of the two portions of their income will remain as they are. If they are removed, then while their income from the corn rent falls in value, their income from the money payment will rise; and the contrary.

Do you endeavour, therefore, to pass the word along, among the commercial and industrious classes, that the ministry, whether they know it or not, are taking side against us;—that there is a simple way of remedying the evil, and that we ought to ask for it. And try to bind the clergy into this union,—in the first place by treating them justly in the affair of the 25 per cent deduction, and in the next place, by demonstrating to them how much their quiet and security are concerned in disentangling themselves from all the perils of the Corn Laws. The clergy are in general quiet men, with numerous families, and averse to gambling. Why should they speculate upon the Corn Laws?

Finally, endeavour to ascertain for me, whether notice ought not as soon as possible to be given of an Amendment on the ministerial bill, to the effect that the income of the clergy arising from the Commutation of Tithes shall be lodged half in a corn rent, and half in a fixed money payment. Why are we to have the weight of the clergy thrown into the scale against the interest of the community? We do not ask to have it thrown in its favour; but to have it *split*.

London, 17 Feb. 1836.

I HAVE to-day given notice, to move as an Amendment on the Bill for the Commutation of Tithes in England and Wales, "That of the amount awarded by the Commissioners according to the provisions of the Bill, *one half* shall continue to be a Money rent for ever, and the other half shall be turned into a Corn rent on the principle set forth in the Bill." To those who are

in possession of the Bill, or of my former letter to you upon the subject, I believe this will be sufficiently intelligible.

I have now to request the attention of the commercial and manufacturing interests, to the importance of making a stand on the present point, if they wish to prevent their prospects of the liberation of commerce from going backward instead of forward. If a demand had been made on our part, for vesting the whole amount of Commutation in a money rent, the agricultural interest would not have failed to declare themselves attacked. It remains to be seen whether the ministry have resolved on attacking the commercial and manufacturing interests, by refusing to make a fair division of the matter in dispute. If those interests do not take up the question, and support it by petitions and all other constitutional means of making an impression on the government, a fortress and strong-hold will have been established for our adversaries, at the moment when we thought we were advancing towards relief.

At the same time, there may be reason to hope, that the proposition on the part of the government may have proceeded from inadvertence, or from an ill-digested notion that it was necessary for preserving the position of the Church. The pressure on men engaged in the cares of empire is necessarily so great, that there can be no discredit in their giving at least a most serious consideration, to the representations of other men whose attention, like yours, has been directed to a particular part.

Upon reading the Bill, there is no necessity for any such complication as vesting the money in the public funds. The arrangement upon that point, is simple and perfect; and it was only in consequence of the Bill not having been before me, that anything was said in my last letter of such a mode of investment.

London, 20 Feb. 1836.

ON Wednesday night, there was a debate on a whimsical question, being no other than whether the Committee appointed to consider and report on the plans for the two new Houses of Parliament, should also receive *estimates* of the expenses of the several plans from the architects proposing them. And it was finally settled against us, that there should be *no estimates*. The Committee, therefore, is to revel among plans resembling Martin's imaginings of ancient Egypt, and to fix on the one that is most like the new Jerusalem, with a romantic contempt for such beggarly elements as the cost of masonry.

On Thursday, there was a great point gained for the people in a quiet way, in the shape of Resolutions for facilitating the taking of names upon Divisions. This has hitherto been done, by dint of great efforts and much trouble, by the Liberals for their own side; and their practice has obliged the Conservatives to do the same. It is now to be attempted to be performed with greater ease and more regularity by authority; and, though there are apprehensions of an endeavour to create failure by voluntary obstacles, it is probable that in one way or other the Liberals will attain their end.

Last night, there was a long debate on Russia, Poland, and Turkey; arising out of a motion for papers by Lord Dudley Stuart. The House was very thin, and the proceedings languid on the whole. The Member for Birmingham (Mr. T. Attwood) was all for active measures; and his speech would have been received thirty years ago with immense applause as a specimen of the "truly British spirit." The ablest speech of the night was that of the Member for Bath (Mr. Roebuck), who was all for peace; but went, in my estimation, as much too far in one direction as the Member for Birmingham in the other. It really does not seem difficult to trace the proper line between the two, by a simple reference to the duties of private life. A man is not to go out "colonelling," and run his head into scrapes in search of remote wrongs and dubious grievances. But neither is he to sit at home in his veranda, with his hookah luxuriously before him, and hear the cries of "murder" and the rest of the "five pleas of the law," contenting himself with what he calls his "moral influence,"—and trusting to the height of his garden wall, and the difficulty the ill-favoured ones without might find in making an inroad on his particular person. Nations, like individuals, are, within certain limits, bound by a common interest on this point of repressing injustice. If England luckily has a high garden wall, or what is better a deep fish-pond all around, the inference is that England is bound to apply these advantages to the general good;—to be the citadel and last reserve of European freedom;—and to view all distant struggles for liberty, as so many battles fought upon the out-posts of her own security. Happily the contest need not be one of arms; the extension of the principles which make Britain strong, is the true weapon with which the mixture of barbarism and civilisation the world calls Russia, is to be baffled and kept down. Whatever Russia may boast, she will not long prevent the apparition of these principles within her borders. She occupies, it is true, the position unfortunately occupied twenty years ago by England, as the head and patroness of despotism throughout the world; but in twenty years

more, the same causes will have produced the same effects, and Russia will no longer vaunt herself the only state that has been able to shut out "disorganising doctrines." I should have been glad to have said something on these matters; but in the first place, the audience was especially ill-disposed for hearing, and in the next, I was burthened with an oppressive dread of being coarsely put down upon some point of form, for lack of experience in the usages of the House. By a movement of this kind I was prevented on Thursday from giving any explanation of the bearing and nature of my Amendment; but I do not mean my "unfledg'd virtues" to be always "cuff'd down" in this manner. In the mean time, I only turn it over to my constituents, and to that larger constituency which I may in some sort be said to have in *partibus exterorum*, as a specimen of the difficulties to be encountered by anybody that takes up their cause. In fact, by laying some little things together, I have arrived at a suspicion that the Whigs are desperately sore upon the subject of the Corn Laws, and have probably made up their minds to carry their Bill through in a hand canter, as a peace-offering to the landed interest. In which I can only the more heartily pray for their disappointment; but it must be effected by the people in the manufacturing and commercial towns rapidly and energetically taking up the case. If you wish to continue to be allowed to bring home *sticking-plaster*, or anything else except what people want to buy, lying still at the present moment will effectually accomplish it.

I promised to say something of the "German commercial league;" but it would be inexcusable to say more now, than that if, as I apprehend to be the case, the Germans are willing to remove their prohibitions on British manufactures as soon as we remove ours on German produce, I have the most lively hope that in this dreaded league itself we see the beginnings of the liberation of the commerce of our good town; though possibly we may be led through some smaller evil, to arrive at greater good. If the Germans have really done what I suppose they have, you may begin to put new ships upon the stocks, for it will be impossible for foreign trade much longer to be prohibited by Act of Parliament.

P. S.—Among local matters, I observe you have something like a feud at Hull between the Licensed Victuallers and the new Beer-house keepers. The Victuallers should try to remove their grievances without throwing blame upon other people; and I beg to note, that when I engaged to put in a word for the Victuallers, I distinctly declined taking any part against the Beer-houses. Judging from the description of politicians who make an

outcry against Beer-houses, there would seem reason to believe they must be very useful to the people. I understand that all mischief among the poorer classes, is concocted at Beer-houses. Where would they have it be?—at the Carlton Club or Crockford's? I cannot comprehend, that the poor must be prevented from gathering together, lest they should do mischief. Or if they must, I could at least point out some places, where claret as well as beer should be stopped on the same principle. I hope the poor will ere long be strong enough, to keep the claret-drinkers in order by a hint of reciprocity. If the Beer-house keepers have anything to urge, I shall be as ready to move in their case as in the other.



London, 24 Feb. 1836.

ON Monday in the debate on the second reading of the Tithe Commutation Bill, I took the opportunity of endeavouring to state the way in which preserving half the amount of Commutation in a money instead of a corn rent, would be an act of naked justice to the industrious classes of the community, who are interested in preventing the accumulation of strong-holds for the supporters of the Corn Laws.

It will sound strangely to you when I state, that this contained the only reference to the interests of industry, commerce, or manufactures, in the whole course of the debate. It was literally true, that in the language of scripture, "none peeped or muttered" upon the subject. As the Catholics of Ireland preserve the memory of the day when the Catholic Association, afterwards so powerful, consisted of five men, so I would propose that we should take the period of this debate, to represent the moment when the interests of all who live by industry were at the lowest ebb possible in the Commons' House of Parliament.

Much was said in the course of the debate, of the Bill's being "a clergyman's Bill," and "a farmer's Bill;" but take my word for it, as sure as we are landlords and have all taken an oath that we have a substantial interest as such, it will come out "a landlord's Bill" and nothing else. There is manifestly no justice, in the clergy having any deduction made at all, for the charges and inconveniences of collection arising out of the old practice. Why would it not be quite as fair to demand, that the landlords should have no benefit from the change of system, but should be charged with the exact amount of any inconveniences they may escape, *the Church* taking the difference?

And is not the equitable division, that each party should enjoy the advantages respectively accruing to them from the improved mode of collection directed by the Bill? Instead of this, the landlords hold themselves out as the necessary recipients of all savings; and in a packed assembly of landlords there is nobody to offer effectual opposition.

On Tuesday, a great point was carried for the security of the community, by the Orange Lodges being put down without a division. The Member for Middlesex read letters containing matter enough to have hanged a dozen Corresponding Societies; and it was in truth a shocking sight, to those who remembered that unfortunate men of the industrious classes are actually undergoing transportation for having unguardedly exposed themselves under a forced and violent interpretation of the law,—to see a collection of individuals, merely because they were great and powerful, treated to the last with every imaginable deference and compliment, and with a distinct declining on the part of the actual government, to agree in declaring that they had brought themselves within the verge of the law.

After the mover and his very powerful seconder (Sir William Molesworth) sat down, Lord John Russell rose, and commenced by, to a certain extent, running a tilt against them both. After this, the Noble Secretary produced his own plan, which was for an Address to the King, praying him to take measures "for the effectual discouragement of Orange Lodges, and generally of all political societies excluding persons of different religious faith, using secret signs and symbols, and acting by means of associated branches." In this the Liberals of all classes of course were disposed to concur; and then the Orange-men were reduced to an effort to get rid of the mention of their societies by name. Lord Stanley made astonishing efforts to effect this result; and was previously seen carrying a note across the House to the Noble Secretary. The report in the House was, that Lord John Russell had at one time decided on conceding the point, when the Member for Tipperary (Mr. Sheil) went to him and produced convincing reasons to the contrary. However this might be, the Noble Secretary maintained his ground; and I cannot help believing his constancy was in some degree assisted, by the loud cries of "No, No," and "Divide," with which every successive plea for concession was met by what are technically termed "the Tail," and a number of the English Radicals. After Lord John Russell's refusal to concede, Sir Robert Peel exhausted every arrow in his quiver, in trying to make some impression on the House in favour of the overmatched Orange-men; returning to the attack again and again in different shapes, as each suc-

cessive attempt was repulsed by the obduracy of his audience. After his final failure, several of the Orange-men endeavoured to put forward a dying plea, or to take credit with their party for pronouncing a decent elegy on their approaching end. And even after the Speaker had put the question, there was "a tiny flourish still," which was met with cries of "Order" from the House.

The result was in fact the triumph of the union of the Irish and English Radicals ; who will doubtless live and learn.

London, 27 Feb. 1836.

ON Thursday, Mr. Lennard moved for a return of the number of soldiers who have suffered corporal punishment or imprisonment since 1830. The Advocate General, if I made no mistake, gave a curious reason for delay ;— he said the cases *amounted to thirty thousand*. The motion brought on a debate on Flogging in the Army ; and from the whole tenor of the attack and defence, it is plain the practice must speedily go off.

After this came on a debate on the late election of the municipal council at Poole. It appears that a Mayor there, had chosen to try how much he could run in the teeth of the Act of Parliament for conducting municipal elections ; and the object of Mr. Blackburne's motion was to get the whole proceedings annulled. Of course the Tories were up in arms ; and they had recourse to that strange rule of the House, by which a minority may stop proceedings as long as they chuse, by moving adjournments one after another. My only wonder is, that they did not in this manner stop the Reform Bill till the Russians could come up.

Last night was a debate on the Spanish policy of ministers ; brought on by the motion of the Member for Oxford (Mr. Maclean) for papers. A wonderful change has taken place in the tone of the Opposition since the last debate on the same subject. No more treasonable outbreaks, on the *dishonour* incurred by the King's officers, through accepting commands in a *force* raised by the King's desire. No more abuse of our countrymen in the ranks of the Queen of Spain, whose principal crime I take to be having contributed to prevent the Carlists from getting to Madrid. The Tories have manifestly gotten light. I hope more preparations are in course, for making the scales fall from their eyes.

London, 2 March, 1836.

ON Monday, the Irish Municipal Corporations Bill was read a second time without a division, after a very long and interesting debate. The Tory policy is, to try to prevent the Irish Corporations from being made useful to the community, by destroying them altogether. After upholding them with all their might for so many years, they now declare them to be so bad in principle, that nothing but their removal can leave the community in safety. Their principal argument in support of this is, that as the Corporations gave support to *one* faction injurious to the community before, so any alterations that should leave them in existence, would only enable them to give support to *another* faction now; forgetting that the question is not between faction and faction, but between a faction and the commonwealth. As well might it be said,—so far as I can see,—“Be careful how you allow your Police to rout out the nests against which it is directed; for it will only be putting the power into the hands of new nests, who will be just as great a nuisance as the old. And above all things take care you do not bring the matter under popular control, for popular control is everywhere the mischief of mischiefs, which nobody has been able to endure since the foundation of society.”

This procedure of the Tories reminds me of the conduct of some of them in respect of franking. While the House of Commons was almost all Tory, it was held the most natural and proper thing in the world that Members should have the power of corresponding without expense with their constituents and others. But when the majority of the House became Liberal, and it was discovered that franks were flying in all directions to Political Unions, and to other societies and individuals engaged in supporting the interests of the people at large, it was found out that franking was a most culpable privilege, and highly discreditable to those who could think of continuing it. Just so it is with the Irish Corporations. So long as they could be used in support of existing injustice, they were good and to be sworn by; as soon as they are likely to be opened to the public, they are bad and to be suppressed.

Last night (Tuesday) was given almost entirely to the arrangement of a general plan for proceedings in the matter of Rail-roads. The only curiosity of the evening, was the undisguised hostility to Rail-roads in general, displayed by some of the anti-reforming interest, on the ground that they were to seduce men into attending to distant concerns, instead of staying

to mind their own business like good people at home*. Was Providence quite right in giving us two legs apiece? Might it not have been better, if we had each hopped on one?

London, 5 March, 1836.

ON Wednesday in Committee on the Prisoner's Counsel Bill, a curious scene occurred upon a point of form; and not without danger of damage to the infant principle of publishing the votes by authority, in which I hope the country by this time has begun to take some interest. When the Committee came to divide, it was discovered that the Resolution of the House declared that upon "every division" the House should be cleared, after which the doors to be opened "by the Speaker's order;" but omission had been made of the words "or Chairman's;" whence it was apprehended, that if the Members once got into the two lobbies, most dangerous consequences might ensue, from the absence of any earthly power to cause the doors of the House to be ever opened again for their admission. This of course was a great triumph for the enemies of the publication of Divisions by authority; and as usual, the point of form went against the Liberals. For my own part, I cannot see why the Chairman should not have followed his orders as far as they were distinct and clear, and left the consequences to take care of themselves. The direction was plain, that on "every division" the House should be cleared. If this had been complied with, the irregularity must have been afterwards committed, of introducing the Members again, without the express words "the Chairman's order" appearing on the Resolution, though that was evidently the spirit of the direction. As it was, the much greater irregularity was committed, of breaking both the letter and spirit of the Resolution, by not obeying the direction to clear the House. But so it is; on all points of form and trials of skill, the Liberals are immeasurably inferior to their opponents. Their enemies act under old and tried leaders; and not a dog gives mouth, but as the seniors of the pack direct. The Liberals have no weapon but their superior hold upon the country, which sends them in a majority to parliament.

* The expressions of this hostility were so amusing, that they appear to have come back again from America in the shape of a burlesque paragraph purporting to contain the complaints of a citizen of the old school; which lately went the round of the English newspapers. At all events if the American wit was not taken from this source it might have been. Many of the sentiments were identical.—*Editor.*

After this matter had been settled, disadvantageously to the Liberal side, the Clause in the Bill which gave to prisoners the right of making a full defence by counsel in court, was carried by 134 to 50; but the Clause which proposed to allow parties to be heard by counsel or attorney before justices of the peace, was rejected by 110 to 93. It might be very agreeable to you and others of my constituents, to know from authority what Members voted and on which side; but this luxury you must be contented to forego, by the decision of the House.

The debate was then resumed on the Poole Municipal Election; and after an amendment from the Tory side had been disposed of by 188 to 70, a Committee to inquire was appointed without a division.

On Thursday, in consequence of a question put by Mr. Roebuck, the Secretary for the Home Department was understood to let out some further dribblets of hope for the Dorchester labourers. These men, it appears, have some chance of being brought back from New Holland in three years; and the incalculably greater offenders of the Orange lodges, have not yet got there at all.

On the same evening, the Second Reading of the Bill for disfranchising Stafford on account of bribery and corruption, was carried by 53 to 6.

Yesterday (Friday) the Supplies for the Navy, including five thousand additional seamen, passed without a division. The most interesting circumstance attending it, was the strong and general opinion expressed on the necessity of providing against the recurrence of the practice of Impressment.

A motion, by a strange use of a privilege admitted in cases of urgent public interest, was forced into the debate on the Supply, for discontinuing the practice of dividing in two lobbies; which necessarily involves the practice of publishing the Divisions by authority. You see therefore, that this system of publication by authority, in which I doubt not that you and others had begun to rejoice, could not exist a fortnight without being assailed as a great public grievance to be thrust into the debate on the Supplies. The Tories, as usual, had all the skill and science on their side. They felt the pulse of the House; and finding the numbers against them, drew off without allowing themselves to be damaged by a Division, to renew the attack at the time they may see best. Indeed a notice of such attack is put on the list for April 26. It may be hoped the Liberals will employ the interval well; and nothing would probably conduce more forcibly to the effect desired, than that Liberal constituencies in general should require their represen-

tatives to transmit to them the printed Divisions as they appear among the Votes, for the purpose of being regularly filed, and that Liberal representatives on the other hand, should prompt their constituents where it may be requisite, to file the lists of Divisions, and give them currency in the provincial papers, or by any other means attract the attention of the public to their contents. In this way, a mass of interest would be accumulating, which would make it harder day by day for the Tories to succeed in their object of cutting off the knowledge from authority, of how the Members vote.

I must not conclude without saying, that I believe the Liberals mean to stick to their point of carrying the publication of all Divisions by authority; and in the mean time they will be glad of any backing that can be given to them by their constituents and the public at large.



London, 9 March, 1836.

AT five minutes after three this morning, upon an adjourned debate, the House of Commons divided on Lord Francis Egerton's Amendment on the Irish Municipal Corporation Bill, the purport of which was to destroy the Irish Corporations with a view to prevent their existence in a reformed state. The numbers were for the Amendment 243, against it 307; majority for the Government 64. The number of the Tories, 243, is precisely the same that voted for the Amendment to the Address on the 4th of last month; the majority against them having increased in the interval, from 41 to 64, or something more than one-half.

The debate on the first day was dull; with the exception of the concluding speech from Lord Howick, who is always good when he is not aristocratic, and on this occasion turned the question round with a new face, as an able counsel does before a *nisi prius* jury at York.

The second day proceeded like the first, till *Jeune* O'Connell (the nephew, Morgan John) enlivened the debate by the display of powers that did no discredit to the name he bears. Another out-spoken and energetic Irishman, (Barron of Waterford), was ill supported by his countrymen and his side; and I could not avoid surmising some local jealousy. To men whose trade it is to sit hour after hour, listening with sheepish patience to the feeblest of the feeble and the dullest of the dull, zeal and courage should be too precious, to be allowed to run to waste because they appear a little out of fashion.

O'Connell was in his strength; and boldly launched the declaration, that if the Irish were refused equal laws, they would demand the dissolution of the Union. One deficiency I remarked; which was, that he did not say, the people of England would aid them in the demand. He might have learned, that the people of England are coming over to him in bulk, and that the great and final reason why Ireland will not be oppressed, is that they, the people of England, are not disposed to stand still and see it. Perhaps you will instil into him whatever may be lacking on this head, when you have the good fortune of receiving him at Hull, as I understand you are to do before long.

Lord Stanley was good in his way; but forced by the necessity of his situation, upon small points and feeble attempts at effect. For example, he made a great effort by pronouncing "*hereticks*" in a ludicrous manner, as distinguished from "*heresy*;" the fact being all the while, that it *did* make a considerable and substantial difference, whether a Catholic priest to his congregation, had asserted that "*heresy*" in the abstract was coming down, (which is what all priests, of all possible depominations, take the liberty of doing in their turns), or whether he had pointed their animosity against the *persons* of their neighbours, by saying "*the heretics*" were in the same state of tumbling to the ground. He ended by quoting thirty lines of Shakspeare (if the newspaper is right in which I counted them); with a most unfortunate tail-piece concluding with the word "*party*," which brought to all minds the Orange-men who were *not* intended, instead of the Liberals who were.

Sir Robert Peel quoted the *Mirror of Parliament* and Virgil; and ended with an allusion to "*the Protestant mind of England*," intended for a threat. I can only trust, that the Protestant mind of England will read him an unexpected version of the history.

The final result is one to be received with satisfaction in all families; as being another step towards the removal of the evils with which the folly and corruption of our ancestors have compassed us about.

London, 12 March, 1836.

On Thursday, Mr. Divett made his motion on the subject of the removal of the additional duty of 50 per cent on retail spirit licenses. The Chancellor of the Exchequer begged the House

to wait, till he should propose his general plan for the arrangement and alteration of duties in April; and as there appeared something fair in this, Mr. Hume and others of the Liberals were disposed to acquiesce in the proposal. But as some still held off, there was evidently the chance of a split; and the Tories poured into the House, in hopes of getting a majority against the Government. Dr. Bowring moved as an Amendment, that the question should be postponed till after the Report of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; which we only carried by 165 to 155. Had my senior colleague and myself been able to see one another, I have no doubt that we should have voted together; and that as it was, the decision of each depended on his having been told or not told, of the tactics the Tories were practising on the occasion.

On Friday, I voted in two minorities with Mr. Hume; one for a reduction of 5,000 men in the standing army, where the Ayes were 43 and the Noes 136; and the other for placing the Foot Guards on the same footing as the troops of the line, where the Ayes were 46 and the Noes 217. I mention this because I believe I have an engagement with certain honest men at Hull, on questions of military finance to vote with Mr. Hume. If it would be agreeable to anybody to know the different voters on these occasions, I am sorry to say it is not yet the pleasure of the House that the divisions in Committee should be published by authority.

I inclose a copy of a letter addressed, at the request of a friend, to the File-makers of Sheffield, through the medium of the *Sheffield Iris**. Any progress towards a community of feel-

* THE FILE TRADE.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE SHEFFIELD IRIS.

London, 5 March, 1836.

SIRS,—Seeing in a copy of your paper lately sent to me, an account of the disputes between the working File-makers and their employers, I cannot but feel great regret, that a well-intentioned body of men such as I have invariably found every portion of the operatives to be, should in any degree run counter to their own interests, and play into the hands of that gigantic oppression under which they and every other part of the industrious community have for twenty years been suffering. The real state of the case I take to be this. The File-makers of Sheffield might have made and sold files to all the world that ever heard of one, if the law would have allowed it. But the landlords conceiving they had an interest, which has turned out to be no interest at all, put themselves in the way to stop it. They got possession of the avenues to law;—they got to be the law-makers;—they made every man swear, before he could be a law-maker, that he had a distinct pecuniary interest, or one they thought so, in deciding *against* the interests of the community at large, and *in favour* of one particular

ing upon the subject of it, between the maritime and the manufacturing towns, must have a tendency to be useful to both.

interest which intended to rob, and has only burnt its fingers after all. They did what a jury would do, which should determine that no man should be admitted into their number, that had not 300*l.* or 600*l.* a-year connected with one side of the question in hand, and against the other; and then they passed a law, not exactly that a File-maker should not be allowed to send his files across the sea, but that he should not be allowed to bring home in return the thing which would sell here for as much money as would pay him with a profit. He might bring home anything he liked *that would not pay*; but the thing that the people abroad had more of than they could use and therefore could afford to sell cheap, and the people here had less of than they wanted and therefore would be glad to pay for high, this thing the File-makers were not to bring, nor others for them.

Now suppose there were no hope whatever of the File-makers ever escaping from this horridly unjust state of law;—suppose it were quite clear that foreign commerce was for ever and for ever to be prohibited by Act of Parliament; would that make it reasonable that the File-makers should aid their oppressors in cutting up such diminished trade as the present state of the law allows them? It is plain that the prohibition to import bread in return for files, is a bounty offered to foreign File-makers. If the people on the Continent might pay for files in corn, that is to say with the corn which would sell here for the same money as the goods with which they are now obliged to pay instead, they would save, say 20 per cent. This 20 per cent therefore, would be cut off from what they can now afford to offer to a File-maker in their own country, by allowing the importation of their corn; and is kept added by the refusal. But will the File-makers oblige their employers to give up the share they might have in this diminished trade, by endeavouring to impose on them unjust restrictions as to what men they shall employ, and what apprentices they shall take? The object of the File-makers must be supposed to be, to cause files to be made by ten men instead of twelve, in hopes that the ten will get the wages of the twelve. But how if the rise in the price of files which first or last must be the consequence, should reduce the quantity that can be disposed of in the foreign markets, in the proportion of ten to twelve? Have the File-makers thoroughly considered all the probabilities of this?

I can have no hesitation in saying, that all these disputes between the masters and the employed, act as only so many tubs for the whale, and distract the attention of all from the great source and origin of the mischief. So long as the operatives and their employers can be kept squabbling on these twopenny differences, the land-owners feel safe that they will not combine to put down the million grievance that oppresses both. Why the employers, who have more leisure, more access to knowledge, than the operatives, should be so supine as they always have been;—why they should sell the great birthright of commerce for such miserable messes of pottage as can befall them in return, is more than I ever could explain. Why the maritime towns, which ought to carry out the files and bring home the corn, should all be asleep, is equally inexplicable. Let us hope that the evil may be corrected, by the operatives getting the start of their employers in knowledge, as they are already the foremost in the suffering.

I am, Sirs, your obedient servant,

T. PERRONET THOMPSON.

London, 16 March, 1836.

THE most remarkable occurrence in the House of Commons on Monday, was the announcement of Lord John Russell, in answer to a question from that very active member Mr. Wakley, that the King had been advised to grant a free pardon to *all* the Dorchester labourers. This, I imagine, may be considered as one of the fruits of Mr. Hume's victory over the Orange Lodges.

On Tuesday the table of the House was loaded with Petitions for the total abolition of the Stamp on Newspapers. Seldom has man seen such a muster. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in reply, came down with a proposition for reducing the Stamp to a penny, to include the postage; but stated that he did not mean in any degree to prejudice or prevent the full discussion of the question on a future occasion. It struck me there was a softness in his eye, which indicated that like Virgil's nymph he had at least imagined the possibility of being followed up in his retreat; and therefore, were I to advise, it would be to agitate the question to the utmost in the period that is to intervene. The only argument I heard advanced from this quarter, much resembled one of those defences which do not contemplate ultimate success. It was, that it was not fair to make the man who received a London newspaper at Edinburgh, pay a postage for it, while the man who read it in London paid none. If this is equity, why is not the Twopenny Post rate increased to pay for the transmission of letters to Edinburgh?

Disputes of this kind are generally settled by a compromise. I should like to know what sum the Chancellor of the Exchequer calculates upon from his penny Stamp on all newspapers, and what imposition upon the portion of newspapers sent by post would bear him harmless, leaving the rest free. If a fair offer was made him upon this point, would he come forward and declare, that his object was not revenue, but the prevention of the circulation of cheap information among the poor?

The agriculturists, or the unreasonable part of them, had a great defeat the same night on their proposed increase of the duty on Foreign Tallow. They were to raise the duty from 3*l.* 10*s.* a ton to 10*l.*; and by this they were to put 300,000*l.* into the pockets of the agriculturists, or as was further explained, a sheep was to be increased in value by 2*s.* 8*d.* and an ox by 19*s.* Now invite our friends at Hull, to follow me through the way in which this gain to the agriculturists was to be raised, and where it was to come from. In the first place there was to be an end to the trade of Manchester, Wigan, Blackburn, &c., which is now engaged in furnishing the cotton-twist or other

goods with which tallow is bought from Russia. And next there was to be an end of the shipping trade of Hull or London, which is now engaged in carrying the goods to Russia and bringing back the tallow. All this trade was to be put an end to, and the precise amount or value of it transferred into the pockets of the agriculturists. How far this may be just;—what right the agriculturists were born with, to take *your* honest trade out of your mouths and put it into their own by Act of Parliament;—is what I leave to yourselves to settle. But I do not see why it should not be equally just, that *you* should put a tax on English tallow, for the sake of increasing the quantity which would be bought with the manufactures of Manchester, Wigan, and Blackburn, and transported out and home in your ships. I say I cannot see why one should be a bit more unjust than the other; and therefore I advise you to apply to parliament to have it at least turn and turn about.

But this is not all—nor half of it. This accounts only for the old price; but it is no part of the intention of the agriculturists that tallow should continue at the old price. Their avowed object is to raise the price of tallow, say from 2*l.* to 3*l.* for a given quantity. We have accounted for the 2*l.*; it is to be taken out of the pockets of the people of Manchester, Wigan, Blackburn, and Hull, and put into the pockets of the agriculturists instead. And this perhaps you will say,—according to the Negro proverb I learned on the decks of a Hull ship,—is “*only changee for changee.*” But where is the additional 1*l.*, which is to be the increase of price, to come from? I will tell you. It is to be taken once from the people who burn tallow candles, and once over again from the shop-keepers or others, with whom the tallow-burners would have spent the money if they had been let alone. So that 1*l.* is to go into the pockets of the agriculturists, and the value of 2*l.* is to be taken out of the pockets of other people to get it for them; the difference, or second 1*l.*, being utterly wasted and thrown into the fire, in the same way as if a man should allow himself to be persuaded to have his fire-wood cut with a blunt axe instead of a sharp one, on the pretence of the benefit it was to be to wood-cutters. Indulge me with going through this simple case; for it is the simplest of all, and exactly analogous to the other. You are advised to hire two wood-cutters, at a shilling a-day each, with blunt axes, to do the work that would be done for you by one wood-cutter with a sharp axe for a shilling. And you are told that if *you* lose a shilling by the process, the wood-cutters gain one. But I ask you, whether this is all. Suppose you had been in the habit of spending these daily shillings on a gardener

to grow you cabbages. Is or is not the loss of trade to this gardener, quite equal to the increase of trade to the wood-cutters? And if it is, then do not this loss and gain balance each other exactly, and is not the necessary consequence that *your* loss,—your loss of the shilling or of the cabbages,—is a *second* loss, and that there are on the whole *two* shillings-worth of loss, for one that is to be gained by the fraternity of wood-cutters? Apply this rigidly to the question of the Tallow; and then say whether I was or was not right, in telling you the agriculturists were to gain 1*l.* by taking 2*l.* from other people.

Two or three things I heard asserted in the debate, were so curious, that I cannot help wishing to set our shop-keepers, and fore-mast-men on Dockside, talking upon them that we might have their opinions. But as time runs short, they shall be deferred to another letter.



London, 19 March, 1836.

IN Tuesday's debate on the question of stopping the trade in Russian tallow, there were some points which I promised to bring forward for the amusement of our friends at Hull.

The first, was the assertion, that our imports from Russia are three times as great as our exports to it; which was gravely offered as a reason why our trade with Russia should be stopped by Act of Parliament. Before going any farther, what does this assertion mean? Does it mean that two-thirds of the goods brought to Hull from Russia are never paid for, but the Russians in their bounty make us a present of the same;—or that if it was so, this would be a reason for giving over the trade, and not rather for trying to increase it with such kind-hearted customers? But if nobody is found silly enough to say it means this, then let us try to lay down what it really *does* mean; and let us suppose two or three rising young clerks from merchants' counting-houses; and two or three of the better class of fore-castle-men who hope to rise to the rank and station of second mate and thence to mate and master, to be called to form a committee to decide whether we have talked sense or nonsense when all is over. I say then, that the assertion that the imports from Russia are greater than the exports, means nothing but this;—that the goods received from Russia are not all paid for by goods that are entered in the Custom-house books as going to Russia, but many of them by goods that go some other way. And the ways in which they go, I submit are these.

1st, There are the goods that go to make a roundabout trade. For example, the Russians get wine or brandy from Portugal, and a Hull ship carries Leeds cloths to Oporto, which are sold there for the good bills of Portuguese merchants, and these bills are transferred to a Russian in payment for hemp brought by one of your ships to Hull. Is there anything in *this* trade, that ought to be stopped by Act of Parliament? When anybody will pretend to show why, it will be time enough to answer.

2ndly, A part of the payment to Russia may be made in hard money; or if you please, in sovereigns. And where, let me ask, is the harm of that? Sovereigns are not found in parsley-beds, or under apple-trees; but made of gold bought in Peru or elsewhere with English manufactures either directly or in some roundabout way, just as much as gold watch-cases or drinking-cups. If gold plate went out to Russia in payment for hemp brought to Hull, nobody would stand up in parliament, and say it must be stopped to prevent a scarcity of gold plate at home. And why, but because it is plain to the weakest capacity, that there is nothing about a trade in gold plate that is not common to all other kinds of trade; that either the gold plate must come in on one side as fast as it goes out on the other (bating only the small rise of price that may be necessary to give a fillip to the gold trade and set it in motion), or the transit of gold plate to Russia must speedily stop of itself. To stop such a trade in gold plate for fear of making a famine of plate at home, would be as senseless as to stop the transit of Port wine or coffee for fear of making a famine of those articles at home; as senseless, in short, as it would be to prohibit all transit trade by Act of Parliament, by way of increasing the quantity of goods consumed at home. If anything so inexorably stupid was carried into effect, would not the immediate result be, that the merchants would order a proportionally less quantity of goods from their foreign correspondents? Would any man in England get a pint of wine the more, or a cup of coffee, from this childish attempt to dam up drinkables at home by prohibiting transit trade? But if this be true of coffee and gold plate, it is equally true of sovereigns, which are nothing but bits of gold with a public mark upon them to save weighing and assaying. If a thousand sovereigns are sent to Russia to pay for hemp brought to Hull, this will in a slight degree raise the value of the sovereigns left at home, in the same way that the transmission of a thousand bags of coffee instead, would have slightly raised the price of the coffee left at home. And this will give a fillip to the British trade with Peru or elsewhere, for gold to make more sovereigns of, just as sending the coffee would have given a fillip to some-

body's trade, with Turkey it may be, for coffee. If it is said, that the value of the sovereign will be raised in every man's pocket at home, till the gold flows in from Peru, and that this will be great loss and damage to somebody;—so will the value of the pound of coffee be raised in every man's locker, till the coffee flows in from Turkey, and where is the harm of that? The argument if good for anything, would stop all transit trade; and if it is not reasonable that all transit trade should be stopped, then the argument in the case of gold is good for nothing. The first light I ever happened to get on this subject, was from an old French merchant at Sierra Leone, who on being consulted on some question connected with the currency of the colony, replied, "*Sare*, money is one merchandise." Depend upon it, the principles that regulate the commerce in gold, are the same as those of any other "*merchandise*," and all that goes to the contrary, is only Currency nonsense, or part and portion of the fallacies with which the world has been abused upon that subject.

3rdly, There is the portion that may be paid for by goods smuggled into Russia through some other country, and which of course do not appear among our exports to Russia. I do not know whether in the particular case of Russia this quantity is small or great; but I do know that many of the smaller manufacturing towns in England subsist almost entirely on the manufacture of articles which are exported to one foreign country for the sake of being smuggled into another.

These three ways are all I know of, by which the difference between the imports and exports entered in the Custom-house books may be accounted for; but it is not impossible there may be more. Whether there are more or not, I stop to submit to our committee before alluded to, that there is not made out a reason which would satisfy a boy of five years old, or girl either, that the trade of Hull in Russian tallow ought to be stopped because the imports under the head of Russia in the Custom-house books are greater than the exports.

The next thing that struck me as amusing, was the assertion, that the trading and manufacturing part of the community were rapidly coming to a consciousness of the interest they have in the prosperity of the agriculturists,—meaning thereby, their interest in giving the agriculturists more for a given quantity of produce than it could be procured for from abroad. The proposition, put into plain English, is briefly this. "Give us sixty shillings instead of thirty for a hogshead of tallow or a quarter of corn, and then we will buy sixty shillings-worth of your manufactures instead of thirty." In other words, you

shall give us sixty shillings-worth of manufactures for a quarter of corn instead of thirty, or have half as much corn for a web of cloth as you used to have. I should not have believed there were men so "soft" as to be taken in by this, if I had not seen it. But it is quite true, that there are men calling themselves traders and manufacturers, who every now-and-then petition the House of Commons to be allowed to represent the interest they feel in "agricultural prosperity," meaning thereby the agriculturists obtaining increased prices through stopping foreign trade. I *doubt* these men being all so "soft;" there is another way of accounting for the phenomenon. They may be little jobbers in some hole or corner, who think they see a chance, that if the agriculturists levy a tax upon the whole community, a greater quantity of it will come into their own particular tills, than will pay for their own particular shares in the general damage.

I am sorry to trouble you with all this. But if it is true, I cannot help believing the people of Hull are interested in it, and that it may count towards showing our political opponents to have been wrong, (as I dare say they have been elsewhere), when they said you had a representative who would never contribute his mite towards the welfare of a commercial town.

On Thursday the House adjourned at a quarter before eight o'clock, in consequence of the resistance made by the Liberals in the House to the introduction of a clause authorising imprisonment for debt, in the Macclesfield Small Debts Bill. The secret of their weakness, was that most of the Irish Brigade were keeping St. Patrick's Day; which, as St. Patrick comes but once a year, can be no great source of triumph to the enemy. It had this bad effect however, that the Liberals were beaten by 23 on the motion to leave out the clause; and on the next day, as there appeared no alternative between throwing out the Bill and allowing it to pass with the clause, the objectionable clause was conserved.

On Friday there was a long debate on the subject of the occupation of Cracow; with no result except the demonstrations of hostility to the arbitrary principle which were made in the course of it. The House in Committee was occupied till half past one, with the Irish Corporations bill.

London, 23 March, 1836.

My account of the proceedings in the House of Commons on Tuesday ought not to conclude without noting, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave such an abrupt and decided refusal

to any entertainment of the plot for putting an end to the trade in Russian tallow, as may be construed to hold out considerable security against new encroachments of the "agricultural interest" in that *or any immediately similar* direction. I suspect that, between his speech and the strength of the Division, *that* earth is stopped, and there will not be a speedy repetition of the demand for cutting off any *new* portion of our trade, to put a fraction of the loss into the pockets of other people. But in other directions, I am far from feeling any confidence of the same kind. Through that mixture of corruption with the ignorance of early ages, which passes by the ludicrous name of the "wisdom of our ancestors," the legislature is formed of individuals who have taken an oath that they have what was conceived to be a strong pecuniary interest one way, and that way *against you*; and however true it may be that some individuals may be disposed to decide wisely and well in spite of such an attempt to bias, it would be perfectly miraculous if the bias did not tell upon the whole. Depend upon it, the "agricultural interest" as it calls itself,—and I use the words in sarcasm, because there is not wanting in the House of Commons a portion of the agriculturists whose eyes are open to the ultimate failure of all schemes of injustice towards others,—is destined to eat up all that can be eaten; and then I hope it will bite against a file. There has evidently been a shuffling, about the ministerial Tithe bill; and you may be agreeably disappointed, as I shall be, if it does not end in the land-owners getting an increased slice out of the Tithes, and coming upon the public in a year or two for a bill to support the clergy. Their next attempt will probably be upon the fund-holders, through a debasement of the currency; and though they may here appear to meet with a check from the fact that an artificial rise of money prices would go to annihilate the present provisions of the Corn Laws, it does not seem to be beyond either their cunning or their power, to effect some arrangement which should secure the one object without letting go the other. Like a fever, they will run their course; but if the constitution can only hold out, the time must come when they will be got under, like other evils in the body politic. After cutting off you and your fellow-citizens from foreign trade by Act of Parliament, they will go on declaring themselves to be the suffering interest; and the same tribunal from which the mischief sprang, will listen to them with partial ears. After shutting up you and themselves in one common injury, and making the country a fraction of the country which in wealth and strength and happiness it might have been, they will produce their own share of the general misery, as reason

why they are to be exempted from one tax after another; and thus they will go on filling your gaols with debtors and the Gazette with bankrupts, till the progress of knowledge opens the eyes of the public, and then their history will be bequeathed to posterity, as an example of the peril of allowing one overbearing interest to get possession of the avenues to law, and ride rough-shod over the rest till the common misery effects abatement of the nuisance.

Against Tallow-plots, however, the Whig government was stark. And another great step towards justice was proclaimed by it on the same day, in the determination to lay the Stamp Duties of different kinds, according to an *ad valorem* rate, instead of a rate increasing upon the poorer classes and diminishing systematically as it is extended to the rich, as the use and wont in such cases has been. The doing men right, is like the letting out of water; and God only knows how far this piece of Whig justice may go before it has done.

On Monday, the consideration of the Tithes Commutation bill was put off till Friday. The Municipal Corporations Act Amendment bill, the Irish Constabulary bill, and the Naval Supplies, were considered in ridiculously thin Committees, arising out of the resolution that the voting in Committees shall take place in "huggermugger,"—(a good word, as I note for the benefit of our friendly critic of the *Packet*, and illustrated by Johnson as follows,—“Secrecy; bye-place.—There’s a distinction between what’s done openly and barefaced, and a thing that’s done in *huggermugger*, under a seal of secrecy and concealment. *L’Estrange*.”) The fact is, that men will not attend, where they are told by a direct Resolution, that their names shall not be published for their constituents; and so jobbery flourishes. This is the more important, because it is understood that a dead set is to be made from various quarters, against the abominable innovation of publishing Divisions by authority.

On Tuesday Mr. Fowell Buxton moved for a Committee to inquire into the working of the apprenticeship system in the colonies; which was agreed to by the government. The West-Indian party made a slight show of opposition; but not enough to provoke anybody to rip up the general badness of their case.

London, 26 March, 1836.

As there does not happen to be anything of great length to report, I take leave to continue the examination of the plan for stopping your trade in Russian Tallow, in the way of tracing its

effects on the different classes of individuals of whom your community is composed. It cannot be necessary to tell your merchants, that a trade put an end to by a tax, is a trade lost; and that they *would* have lost a trade in tallow, to the exact amount of the tallow they imported and sold at the old price, and could not import afterwards. Nor will they be slow in finding out that this stoppage to their trade must have displayed itself, in a proportionate number of bankruptcies, or else retirements from business to avoid them, the exact amount of which, they are much more likely to be able to guess at, than any other parties that could be named. And these failing or retiring merchants, must of course carry with them a proportionate number of clerks and subordinates of all kinds. A proportionate number of young men designed by their parents for business, must be returned upon their parents' hands, to be a burthen instead of an assistance. A number of these must be baulked in their honest prospects of settling in the world by marriage as their fathers did before them. There must be grief in families, among mothers, sisters, wives, and those that hoped to be. And all this, because a stupid and unjust law had been made, to take away your honest trade with an Act of Parliament instead of with a pistol, and give it to somebody else, with a huge loss to the community at large during the process.

And could it be any more necessary to tell your ship-builders and ship-carpenters, that if the tallow goes, the shipping that carried it must go with it? That there must have been silence of the mallet in your dock-yards, to the exact extent of the shipping this tallow had employed? Or to tell your seafaring men and all their kin, that there must have been fewer boys apprenticed to the sea, more of those who had served their time unable to find ships, fewer foremast-men rising to be mates, fewer mates to masters, and more masters eating up their money in the banks at home because there were not ships to go to sea? All this seems plain enough; but is this all? When all these merchants, ship-builders, sailors, clerks, and servants, have been laid upon the shelf, will your tailors make more clothes, your druggists sell more rhubarb and diaculon, your watch-makers more watches, will your lawyers have more deeds to draw, your doctors have more to cure, your clergy more children to christen or couples to marry, your bankers more accounts to keep? Will anybody show me one living man in Hull, who directly or indirectly will not be the worse?

But if all this would be the consequence of raising the duty on tallow from 3*l.* 10*s.* to 10*l.*, is it not clear that a proportionate degree of mischief must have been done by laying on the duty

of 3*l.* 10*s.* at all?—that in consequence of this duty, you must at this moment be so much worse than you might have been?—that there must have been just so many traders in the list of bankrupts, who might have been now holding up their heads on 'Change; so many youths thrown back upon their parents; and so many men and women, young and old, sinking under the misery of having been what is called "unfortunate in life"? And if all this comes by tallow, is it not just as plain, that it would have come, and did come, by everything else in which your foreign trade was prohibited or checked by duties? Can it then be any secret, why year after year the language of distress has been heard from your town;—why there was nothing but complaints,—and I am sure they came to me in India,—that Hull was pining, pining, and honest men could not get a living in the place? There may have been better times since; but if there have, assuredly they did not come by the duties that check your foreign trade, but in spite of them, and would have been so much better still, if the duties had been away.

Besides all this, there is the mischief of raising a farthing candle to a halfpenny, for all the burners of candles; and taking all this amount over again, from the traders of various kinds, with whom the candle-burners would have spent the difference if they had been let alone.

Now what have the Tories in Hull to urge, for their constant fighting for the destruction of your trade by all manner of foolish prohibitions, and most of all, that giant folly, the prohibition of trade in corn? What do they or any of you get by it? Ask them if they can show you? Will they buy you up, by offering to build two or three ships for some of the monopolies they intend to leave? This is the way men gull themselves and one another. They have got into their heads that the destruction of your trade is part and portion of "good government;" that the freedom of your commerce is a "disorganising doctrine." There is no help for it; you must not quarrel with them, except when they ask for your vote; they will have children that will be wiser, if they never mend themselves.

In my next, if opportunity serves, I will try to show how little real reason an honest and sensible agriculturist has to fear the restoration of your commerce; and how utterly untrue it is that God has made one set of men to be finally benefited by the oppression of another. And in this lies your hope. When men are of a certain strength, there is no beating them but by recruiting in their own ranks against the rest.

On Thursday Mr. Robinson presented eight Resolutions on Taxation to the House of Commons; according to, I believe, his

annual custom. They were neither very good nor very bad. But as there was nothing positively objectionable in them, except in one relating to the Currency, I regret they did not meet with more acceptance from our side of the House. The Liberals do not seem to understand the policy, of accepting all the good the other side may lapse into.

On Friday progress was made with the English Tithe Commutation bill in Committee, as far as the 12th clause. Lord John Russell appeared in feeble health; contradicting the intimations from some quarters, that he was suffering under *indisposition* of another kind.

London, 29 March, 1836.

I ENGAGED to show that the agriculturists have no real interest in suppressing our foreign trade. Let us take a case, then, in those countries which have been much before the minds of all our friends in consequence of late events. If it should turn out that *Boothia Felix*, or any other part of the coast of the Polar seas, was all made of alternate layers of coal and iron, (and I am not sure that there are not appearances of both these substances being abundant in those regions),—such a country would be very likely to be at some time the seat of extensive manufactures, population, and wealth. And if it should also happen,—which is not impossible,—that coal and iron should fail in the rest of the world, the consequence would be inevitable, that our Manchesters, Sheffields, and Glasgows, would all have to migrate Northward, and there would be as great a change as when wealth and political power removed themselves from Rome to bleak and savage Britain, a prophecy of which would have been just as incredible to an ancient Roman, as a similar one with respect to the Polar regions might be to some English of our day. Towns would be built with covered roads warmed by steam; and railways would in time be tunnelled under the ice, from one great cotton-factory to another all the way to the North Pole. But what are the people to live on? Manifestly, foreign corn. The country might produce “small salad” in August; or new potatoes and green peas might be got under glass, and gooseberries be made about as plentiful as pine-apples are here. But the great staple of food, must be brought from other countries, as certainly as the cotton which they span. Suppose then, that after some progress had been made, Sir Felix Booth, if he be the happy land-owner, should be persuaded

to say he would have a Corn Law ;—that he would confine the people of the country to such corn or other vegetables, as could be grown in chinks and crannies with a South aspect, or in other ways be created at a greater expense than importing from abroad ;—with the idea that he should get more rent from the miserable in-dwellers. And first, what would the Parliament of Boothia say to such a plan ? Would there be any persuading them, that the great gains to the lord of Boothia, were to be shed abroad upon them in fertilising showers, and the last state of their country was to be better than the first ? Or if the process of restriction had begun, would they allow Sir Felix to produce himself as the great suffering interest, and recommend himself in a King's speech for relief by tightening the laws, or diminishing his contributions to the public purse ? And next, is there any probability that the lord of Boothia himself should not perceive, that to execute such a law, would be to cut down his rents to what they are at present—*nothing* ? He would never be gulled by the notion, that all the foreign corn brought into the country, was so much taken away from what he would grow himself ; because he would know with a perfect knowledge, that make Corn Laws as he pleased, he would never grow it at all. He would know that he should not grow, not only the corn, but the rein-deer mutton that would have been eaten along with it. He would be fully aware, like a sensible owner of icebergs as he is, that though in the new state of things he might receive higher rents for some nooks and corners which under famine prices might be made to produce what men could eat, he would lose enormously upon the whole, by the absence of what he used to make of his lands in various ways arising out of the country's being covered with a flourishing commercial and manufacturing population. In short he would beg and pray, that the country might not be carried back to what it is at present. He would be the very last man,—unless, what nobody believes, he is demented and incapable of taking care of his own affairs,—that either now or at any conceivable period, would go to the trouble of hatching a Corn Law.

And what is true of him, would be true of all that in any shape lived by land. There would not be a man in Boothia, gentle or simple, that would put his head out of his pea-jacket to ask for such a foolish thing as having the foreign trade in corn prevented by Act of Parliament. The farmers, if such there were, would ask what was to be done with their sons, if employment in manufactures and foreign trade were stopped. A farmer may have one son take his own place, but he cannot have a dozen ; or if they try, they must only bid one against

another, and so starve the whole, as men are doing now ; and a labourer the same. If, by purchase from the great owner, there were petty landlords, they would be in exactly the same predicament in respect of their children ; their tall idle sons, and gaunt unmarried daughters, must all come and live on them at home as so many miserable annuitants. None could go forth to make a fortune by trade ; for there would be a law against trading to make fortunes by. All these classes would see themselves threatened with being shut up as in a cage ; and all would have the pinching consciousness, that to cut down the trade and manufactures of Boothia to what could be kept on Boothian corn, would be the maddest of all follies for the landed interest of Boothia in the end.

You will say, this is an extreme case ; and so it is. But will anybody show me, how the same effects shall not arise in due proportion, in a situation where the circumstances shall be less extreme ? Do the landlords about Hull, for instance, really think that it is for their interest that Hull should be cut off from all the trade and commerce that would arise out of a free trade in corn ? Suppose they grew less corn ;—would not gardening do for them as well ; and does not this change always take place in the neighbourhood of large and flourishing towns, and nobody complain ? Sift this ; try to work it out. Some of your farmers told me at the last election, that their state was really so bad, that they had a mind to try whether the removal of the Corn Laws might not make it better. Invite them to consider, whether the Boothian farmers would not come to exactly the same conclusion.

When a Corn Law was first laid on, either in Boothia or here, it is likely enough that a spirit of encouragement might be given to the farming trade, by the rise of prices which at the time ensued. But the farmers would soon multiply, and the demand come down, till the two ends met, and the farmers were in exactly the same condition as before, except that there were four of them bidding against one another for farms instead of three, and that there was moreover this new feature in their case, that they were cut off from employment for their children in other directions, in consequence of the check put upon the general industry of the country. In short they would find, that they had baked a cake for other people, and had to eat it themselves. And their only way of getting with any comfort out of the scrape, would be simply this ;—they must ask to have foreign corn admitted into Boothia again, not all at once, but by such gradations as shall allow the good they will derive from the openings made for the employment of their children in

industry of other kinds than farming, and from the general prosperity of the country, to something like keep pace with the temporary depression which may arise to the farming trade during the process of returning to an honest system,—such depression being in fact the converse or counterpart to that spirit of improvement to their trade, which was stated as the temporary consequence of laying on the prohibition. And when they have got out of the bog, the next thing they have to do is to take care never to come there again, and to eat off their own fingers sooner than think of employing them in trying to take money out of their friends the manufacturers' pockets by a Corn Law. This is what they must come to at last; and there is no occasion for any quarrelling, any ill will. The process is going on fast enough. The harpoon is in their backs, and they know it. They may thrash for some time with their tail, and spout a little yet through their blow-holes in Parliament; but they must turn the white up before long, and then they will come alongside and be ours.

On Monday the Third Reading of the Irish Municipal Corporations bill was moved in the House of Commons. Except a very brilliant speech from Sheil, there was little but repetition of former debates. At two in the morning the Third Reading was carried by 260 to 199; majority 61. In the last division on the same Bill (on the morning of 9th March) the numbers were 307 to 243; majority 64. So that if the present majority were increased in proportion to the number in the House on the preceding occasion, it would be 73.

To-day (Tuesday) the Report of the Hull and Selby Railway was brought up; and notice was given by Colonel Sibthorp that he would oppose the Third Reading, which takes place to-morrow.

London, 31 March, 1836.

ON Tuesday, after the proceedings noticed in my last letter, a lively debate ensued on the ministerial appointments to the magistracy. The Tories maintained, that though they had appointed Tory lieutenants in the counties, and Tory magistrates everywhere else where they had the power, they now were "sensible 'twas very wrong," and *their* error was no excuse for Lord John Russell's rejecting six Conservatives at Bristol. This is of a piece with their attempt to destroy the Irish Corporations.

The remarkable point in the evening, was Mr. Roebuck's attack upon Sir Robert Peel, and the way in which the late prime minister was brought out in reply.

On Wednesday the Third Reading of the Hull and Selby Railway bill was carried by 128 to 9; and the bill passed the House of Commons.

On the same day I sent to the committee of your Municipal Corporation for watching Parliamentary proceedings, a notice by Mr. Balfour for obliging Whale Ships to carry out twelve months' provisions, and a Bill brought in by Mr. Baines and Dr. Lushington for relieving certain classes of Dissenters from the Declaration required for becoming members of a Municipal Corporation, and substituting another Declaration.

The House at rising adjourned till Monday 11th April. And so I take my leave for the holidays.



London, 13 April, 1836.

On Monday night I made one with Mr. Hume in a division of 9 to 53, against keeping up the "volunteer corps" in Great Britain and Ireland. I apprehend that you will find the corps thus designated are principally if not entirely yeomanry cavalry; and that you will agree with me, that the real effect of these corps, is to arm the agriculturists who ride horses, against the manufacturers who generally do their work on foot. In short, the "Corn-Law Guards," would perhaps be the appropriate title to which they should be gazetted for their services.

As the division was in Committee, the people will not have the satisfaction of being officially informed of the way in which their representatives severally voted. And I can further tell them, that the Tories have a motion before the House, for involving all our divisions in the same kind of discreditable secrecy.

On Tuesday Mr. Ewart (Liverpool) moved for leave to bring in a Bill for the equal division of landed property among children in cases of intestacy; and was *refused* by the votes of the ministry. I wish these ministers would not throw dirt upon our beards, the night after we come up from trying to keep the people in the country a little to their standard. The Member for Truro (Mr. Tooke) opposed the leave to bring in the Bill, by intimating that it would injure the House of Lords; and because the member for Bath (Mr. Roebuck) replied to this, the ministers took advantage of it to say, that if the discussion

had been confined to a question of political economy, they would have voted for the motion, but because an opponent of the motion had introduced the House of Lords, they would not. The sum and substance of the arguments against us, amounted to this;—"The House of Lords cannot be supported but by keeping up a habit of injustice, therefore a habit of injustice must be kept up that the House of Lords may be supported." Subsidiary arguments of other kinds were used. One said an alteration of the law would be nugatory and produce no effect at all, and another said an alteration of the law would bring down the whole frame of policy established by our ancestors. But striking off the arguments that cut against each other, I think what is given above, was the substance of what remained.

Leave was refused, by a majority of 45 to 29. As was shrewdly intimated, in respect of the question of Primogeniture this is only "the beginning of the end."

London, 16 April, 1836,

ON Wednesday the question of Military Flogging was brought before the House of Commons, and with the very unexpected result, of the ministry taking the most decided part in insisting on the continuance of the practice, producing thereby a majority of 212 to 95 in favour of keeping us what Mr. Cobbett denominated "a flogged people." To us who remember how bitterly the mere inactivity of the government on this question was thrown in the faces of the Liberals at the last election, the fact must seem peculiarly deplorable; and my constituents at Hull will probably all join in the feeling, which induced me to tell the ministers in as plain terms as I was able, that I believed the section of the Liberals in our part of the country whom we sometimes distinguish by the name of Whigs, would be heartily ashamed of the way in which their nominal leaders had fallen behind the spirit of the times on this occasion.

But there is some secret. It is not in the nature of things, that men of good families and decent education, should exhibit themselves hour after hour, pouring out the obsolete common-places which their party has risen to power by exploding, risking the attachment of their followers, and running at every moment against the memory of some great man among their predecessors who lives in the hearts of the community for

having trampled on the very absurdities to which they are now contented to appeal,—without some reason, gross, palpable, and capable of being defined. Shall I attempt the definition? They have submitted to a compact, which it would not be difficult to bring within the limits of what in the cases of unprosperous men is denominated treason, for excepting the regulation of the Army from the constitutional responsibility and direction which apply to the other branches of the government. They have consented to undertake a fragment of the administration, and to allow the remaining fraction to lapse into the state of irresponsibility in which it may have existed under the Tudors and the Plantagenets. Instead of a responsible administrator of the Army, the ministers (with my ears I heard them say it) are to be responsible for the selection of the irresponsible; and with this kind of “responsibility once removed,” and next of kin to no responsibility at all, the people are to be cheated of a fraction of the constitutional monarchy they thought they had secured. The Army is to be a *easus omissus*; it is to be out of the constitution, or to be a constitution to itself. The British government is to be a party to the Quadruple Treaty; save always St. James’s and the Horse Guards, and they are to be with the camp of Don Carlos. We have not a government; or we have two governments. We have an ostensible ministry producing themselves on certain benches of the Houses of Lords and Commons; and we have a *camarilla* sitting God knows where, intending God knows what, and educating the army in such habits and expectations as may be best suited to their purpose. This is a state of things which cannot last; but it *is* the state, and it is as well to know it.

On Thursday the same question was brought on in another form, by Mr. Lennard’s motion for the abolition of Flogging in time of peace. This was carried against us by 135 to 62; in which by a nice process may be detected the adhesion of as many as *three* timid gentlemen, who could vote for this motion and could not for the other. Flogging, it seems, is the pivot on which our existence as a nation turns. It has turned on every “damned thing,” which from time to time the progress of civilisation has enabled us to throw from us into everlasting contempt.

Mr. O’Connell, in whom we have now a sort of domestic interest*, made one of his “turns-out” on this occasion. He

* Since the public reception given to him at Hull during the Easter recess.

scouted the mincing phrase of "corporal punishment," and plainly called it "a dog's treatment," which "decent dogs" themselves do not submit to. Lord! Lord! that the English people, who fought at Marston Moor and Worcester, and shut their gates on kings, should to this hour be scourged like hounds at the pleasure of their aristocracy!

On the same day a motion by Mr. Robinson, for the appointment of a Committee to consider under what regulations foreign corn and flour might be admitted and exported without interfering with the tyranny of the landed interest, was rejected by 77 to 40. Suppose the manufacturing interest had laid a tax for twenty years on home-grown corn, and the farmers were found begging to be allowed to export some miserable fragment of their corn to the West Indies or elsewhere, under the assurance that the greatest care should be taken it did not injure the monopoly of the manufacturers. How would this look in the eyes of posterity; and do you think those eyes will look with a bit more of veneration on ourselves? It might make a man laugh "under the ribs of death," to see how on these occasions the commercial and manufacturing interests come meekly forward with all manner of self-denying ordinances, and beg the landed oppressors to believe they have not the slightest intention of shaking their supremacy. "*Me poor black man; can't live without white Massa,*" is but a type of this servility or ignorance. I wish somebody would give me a mission, never to allow the Corn monopoly to be alluded to, without a few hard words indicative of the discredit of submitting to it, and chop off my parliamentary head the first time I failed. But no man goeth a warfare any time, without somebody at his back.

On Friday the Navy Estimates were passed. I was told to be prepared in case of opposition on the subject of the expense of the Cove*; which was the more likely as some of the Tories have expressed their displeasure at it. But nothing was said.

London, 20 April, 1836.

THE Petitions from the Methodists and others, in Hull and the neighbourhood, on the subject of Sunday Observance, were presented at an early period by Mr. Hutt; and nothing pre-

* The vessel fitted out under the command of Capt. James Ross, to go in search of the missing whale-ships.

vented me from adding my testimony to the high respectability of the Petitioners and the claim they had to be heard with attention, except the difficulty, greater I think than is justified by either necessity or convenience, of getting a word in edgewise on the presentation of the Petitions of the people.

But though I shall at all times be ready to give this testimony, either in support of such Petitions when presented by other Members, or in the case of any that should be entrusted to myself, I cannot conceal my opinion, that Petitions of this nature are likely to produce a directly contrary effect to that desired by the Petitioners. In fact they *have* produced it; for it is mainly owing to the pertinacious efforts of portions of the community to coerce the rest upon this point, that a spirit of inquiry has been set on foot, ending in a widely spread conviction, supported by the active adherence of some eminent persons in the religious world and the admissions of others, that there is not the historical or theological basis for the claim advanced, which the claimants assume;—that it is in fact a case of the same kind as if the Catholics should put forward a request to Parliament to have all the world coerced into keeping Friday as a fast-day, or the Jews their Sabbath. Such at least, I am persuaded, is the conviction of the great majority within the House of Commons; and if attempts of the kind lately exhibited are persevered in, they will only end in leaving a stronger example of the impolicy of not letting well alone, and of the interest all classes of religious persons have in confining themselves to the defence of the right of propagating their own opinions by argument, and not grasping at the power of forcing others to conform to their faith or practice by law.

The real state of the case is, that the public is no more convinced, that because the Jews were prohibited travelling beyond a mile on Saturday, therefore our rail-roads must be shut on Sunday, than it is persuaded that the payment of tithes to Melchizedek or to the Levites is binding on the House of Commons now. There is no direction, and no evidence, for the transfer of either of these Jewish burthens to ourselves. On the contrary, what is known is, that it was only in the later and corrupted periods of the Church, that the ecclesiastics bethought themselves of referring to these Jewish ordinances, as means of establishing their power. There is evidence that the early Christians practised certain religious observances on the first day of the week; but none that they attempted to transfer the Jewish ceremonial burthens, still less that they applied to the Emperors for power to coerce their neighbours into the endurance of them.

Not a whit more attention, I apprehend, will be likely to be gained from Parliament, by advancing under cover of the plea of securing to every man a day of rest. It is a subterfuge upon the face of it; and subterfuges never prosper. The object is not to secure to men a day of rest, for experience has shown that there is much more danger of their taking two; but to get the power of forcing them to employ it in particular ways agreeable to the Petitioners, and not in others. It will have just as much chance of success, as if a prayer were advanced for giving to all the community by law, the advantages spiritual and corporal, of the Catholic fast-days. It will be stopped at once, as religious intolerance walking abroad under a cloak. The public will not endure it; and if the sectaries are obstinate, the public will take a leaf out of the sectaries' book, and be obstinate too; if the sectaries are enthusiastic, the public will be enthusiastic; and if the sectaries go as much further as they please, there will be no reason why the public should not meet them with the same. The community has not gone to the pains it has in securing to all sects the liberty of private opinion in religious matters, to allow itself to be bullied now, by the disposition of any sects to make their own opinions law.

The Methodists know very well, that if any man thought of injuring a hair of their heads, or cutting them off from the smallest fragment of their liberty of holding any doctrine or practice which their consciences approve, I must at any moment be "first turn" for taking up their cause. But they will not quarrel with me for telling them, that they do not promote their own objects, by asking for the power of coercing others, on questions where the opinion of the community is far from being united on their side.

On Monday the House went into Committee on the Registration of Voters bill. An Amendment proposed by Mr. T. Duncombe, for repealing the portion of the Reform Act which requires the payment of poor-rates and assessed taxes as a qualification for voting in boroughs, was rejected by 154 to 51. The House seems to have no notion of allowing the voters the chance of stopping the supplies.

On Tuesday Mr. Daniel Whittle Harvey brought on his motion for a Committee *to inquire* into the merits of what he called the "he and she pensioners" upon the Pension List. Be assured that this is one of the last matters the House will ever inquire into; meanwhile it cannot be denied, that the "poor sufferers," as we say at York in assize time, are made to eat their bread with as much annoyance as if it was baked by the ugly process proposed to the unhappy prophet. The motion was rejected by 268 to 146.

London, 23 April, 1836.

ON Wednesday there was a discussion in the House, of an importance very disproportioned to the small attention it appears to have attracted from the public. It was, in plain terms, a struggle between the Speaker and certain Members of the House, upon the limits of the right of speaking on Petitions. The quest on undoubtedly presents considerable difficulties ; but I am disposed to be among those who think it has not been settled the right way, and must be settled in another way, even though at the expense of a sturdy resistance directed to a quarter where any contest is far from being abstractedly desirable. It is quite true, that if every Member on presenting a Petition were to make a long-winded speech, followed by another from the supporter and half a dozen others on both sides who chose to enter into debate, the result must be, that only one Petition in twenty could ever be presented at all. But on the other hand it is also true, that if the Petitions of the people are to be presented with only the announcement of their names and objects, and then be huddled into a bag, they may very nearly as well be huddled into a bag without. The case seems to be one not to be settled by any absolute rule ; and least of all by a rule prohibiting, in the main at least, the speaking on Petitions. And one great objection to such a rule is, that certain interests which are powerful in the House, set it at complete defiance, and not the slightest attempt is made to enforce it upon them. For example, let an agriculturist get up, as the Member for Bath said, " in an agony about taxed-carts, and he shall go on and be followed by his compeers, without rule or limit ; while half a dozen men who are instructed to say a few words in explanation or support of the wishes of their constituents, are frowned down to make him room. The plea that Members should reserve their observations for the solemn discussion of the question at some future time, is of no substantial weight ; it only goes to cut off a useful instrument from Members in the gross, to pour the whole into the scale of some overbearing interest. The truth is, that on the presentation of Petitions, there ought to be a *petite guerre*. No reasonable Petition of any importance should be introduced, without a few words from both the presenter and seconder ; and no unreasonable Petition, as for instance of the kind so common for pilaging the public by monopolies of various kinds under the title of "protection," should find its way without a word from somebody in exposure of its tendency. It would certainly be a very useful understanding, that none of these speeches, except under peculiar circumstances, should exceed one minute ; but

this would be a rule to be enforced by that *ultima ratio* the impatience of the House, rather than by the direct interference of their organ in the chair. Petitioners would do well to insist on their representatives always saying *something*, both on presenting their Petition and in support; and if the public would put forward this demand, any theories which may have been formed in opposition to it would rapidly give way. I dare say the public think it is idleness or treachery, when their Petitions are put under the table and they hear no tidings of any word being mumbled in support. But they are not aware of the artillery of frowns their representatives must face, to get-in as much as would fill two lines of type, upon a subject which may involve their own credit with their constituents, and the interests of myriads.

On the same evening there was a rather brisk debate whether the vote of a Member should be disallowed upon a railway bill because he was a holder of shares. I voted against it, or as near it as the case allowed; and for this reason,—that if you disallow such a vote, you ought also to disallow the votes of twenty Members on the other side, who may hold shares in canals or other undertakings hostile to the railway; and since you have no chance of doing this, the other is a one-sided disallowance in favour of the enemies of railways. And besides, it is leaving unbalanced biases in various other directions. I should like to know what the House would say to a proposal, that no man should vote upon a railway question that had not 7500*l.* (which I take to be the equivalent of 300*l.* a-year at 4 per cent) vested in shares. Yet this is the exact parallel to what is, and is to be, the rule of the House upon the great question between the agriculturists and the commercial community.

The night was closed by another debate on the subject of Russia, as unfortunate in its conclusion as those which have preceded it. I am thoroughly grieved at the line taken by some of the Radicals upon this question. These men are nursing a war; and the Member for Bath I take to be little less than an instrument in the hand of Providence for bringing on the great battle of Armageddon. All history shows, that the progress of overbearing powers has been mainly forwarded by the petty policy of states and countries at some distance from the immediate danger, shutting themselves up upon the sagacious principle of waiting till the evil came to their own doors. I disbelieve the position, that there is such a thing as an “insulated” individual, or an “insulated” country, in the universe; there may have been in the days of Nimrod, but can be none since

the printing-press and steam have levelled all boundaries and made common all interests. I cannot believe either, that the common interests of civilized countries are advanced, by the Emperor of Russia's agent on the back benches of the House of Commons (and I understand he had one there last night) drinking in the information, that the barbarities to the Poles are not to be resisted, "because it is the bargain in every revolution that men are to gain by it in the event of success, and be sufferers if they fail." What is this but saying, that if you are cruelly treated by cutpurses, it is fitting nobody should interfere, because it was part of your bargain when you risked walking in the streets? It is the Tory argument for the murders of our countrymen by Don Carlos;—"They knew they were liable to it, therefore it is right." You will stamp with vexation, at seeing Radicalism in such company. But the end of the whole will be this. The truckling to the barbaric power will at last be carried a step too far; and then the popular spirit on the Continent will cast off its *juste milieu* rulers, who will rightly be regarded as partakers with the enemy; and the odds are that there ensues an outbreak not very dissimilar in some points to that which convulsed Europe at the commencement of the French Revolution, with the just and well-defined object of driving Russia from all interference with Western Europe, and if possible dividing and revolutionizing her own territory. This is the only extensive war with which Europe is likely to be afflicted; and this it is which the "selfish" school of politicians are doing their best to bring upon our heads, instead of staying off the evil as they might, by rallying opinions and showing front to the barbarians which should deter them from advance. What do we mean by a selfish individual in private life? We mean one who grasps at petty and immediate comforts, and loses more than he gains, in the loss of estimation and assistance from his fellows in their turn. And the same might be the definition of a selfish politician. What should we think of a man who declared, he would do nothing to stop robbery till he found it knocking at his own door? Could the fraternity of thieves wish for a better customer?

It is true that England may to a certain extent be sheltered; that is to say, she may always be the last to be eaten. But this does not prove, that she has not unnumbered interests bound up with the general liberty and prosperity of the Continent, which it is the great business of men calling themselves politicians to pursue. When your Mechanics' Institute has gone on a few more seasons, its members will be able to read a lecture on this point to some in the House of Commons.

Having written at such length, I will defer any observations on Thursday's and Friday's debates till my next. And there was nothing but what will keep.

I will only notice, that on Monday, I believe will come on the motion on the part of the Tories, for abolishing the printing of the lists of Divisions which you have been accustomed to receive almost daily, and returning to the old imperfect, partial, and disgraceful method of voting in secret on the part of the pretended representatives of the people.

London, 27 April, 1836.

ON Thursday Sir Andrew Agnew brought forward his motion on Sunday Observance; the debate on which you will have seen in the reports. But I would especially warn you against giving way to an idea, not unlikely to be formed on inspection of one side of the debate, that there was anything in the conduct or temper of the House on this occasion, different from what it displays on other subjects. The supporters of motions of this kind, have a disposition to represent themselves as coming before the House under circumstances of ridicule and opposition, for which I assure you, on the credit of any qualifications for giving evidence you may ever have ascribed to me, there is not the slightest foundation in fact. By which I do not intend a charge of designed misrepresentation, but to mark the importance of preventing a great country from falling under the guidance of those bitter feelings of sectarian bigotry, which disqualify their possessors from forming a judgment on what passes in their presence. It is utterly untrue that any violence or ridicule was put on the promoters of Sunday bills; but they present themselves to the House with an air of insolent assumption that every man who is not with them is scarcely fit for decent society, which could hardly be surpassed by the most bigoted Catholics in the height of their supremacy, and which it is certainly very hard to endure with equanimity. Lord Sandon among other things said, "there was an intolerance against religious observances." Have we not, then, the right our fathers had, to be intolerant of the religious observances of other people being forced upon us with a faggot or a treadmill? If I believe that there is double the scriptural and authoritative evidence for Transubstantiation, that there is for the Judaical observance of Sunday, where is the difference between my father's resistance and my own? I foresee we

have not got to the end of this question, and that the Judaizing bigots have been permitted to run into that pride which "goeth before a fall."

The ministers, contrary to the expectation in the House, voted for the leave to bring in; which was carried in consequence by 200 to 82, a minority tolerably indicative of the final safety of the public.

On Friday we chewed the cud of the Carlow County Election over again. Time was, that when the brains were out, the man would die. The questions were carried in favour of Mr. O'Connell, by 243 to 169, and 238 to 166.

On Monday the Whigs announced their intention of standing to their guns on the question of the Appropriation of the superfluities of the Irish Church; which was received with immense cheers. The House afterwards went into Committee on the Registration of Voters bill, and there were two divisions. But as the voting in Committee of the House continues, through a verbal error as I stated at the time, to be a mystery and a job, I shall not trouble you with the statement of the numbers.

In the mean time, the motion for returning to the old corrupt practice of secrecy in the other divisions of the House, is put off till the 21st of June. As long as any motion to this effect appears upon the notices, the public will do right to keep their eyes upon the question. Liberal constituencies should demand of their representatives the regular transmission of the printed Lists of Divisions by post; for which purpose the Member has only to inclose the List, (which is sent to him every morning), in an open cover like a newspaper, writing "*Parl. Pro.*" at the top of the direction, and his name at the bottom as in a frank, but without being counted in the number of his franks; and in the same way he can send any other Parliamentary Proceedings, though as large as a folio volume. And when the constituencies have done this, it will probably not be long before some of them demand of Parliament the abolition of the disgraceful secrecy in the case of voting in Committee of the House.

On Tuesday, motion was made and question put, "That it is the opinion of this House, that the attendance of the Bishops in Parliament is prejudicial to the cause of Religion." The motion was prefaced by a speech of extraordinary mildness and beauty from Mr. Rippon. It is to be hoped the party opposed do not intend to announce themselves persecuted; though they threw out the usual dirt, about "not to be wondered at from such a quarter,"—by which they always mean that the speaker ought to be hanged. They mustered, however, powerfully; and as

they refused, with the exception of a straggler or two, to enter into debate, the question was brought to the vote with a precipitancy that shut out many on the opposite side who intended to be present. O'Connell arrived just as the Speaker was going to put the question. Mr. Hutt desires me to say, he had gone into the House of Lords to hear the attack on the Irish Municipal Bill, and the division was over before he expected the subject to be brought on; which prevented his being with us. Dr. Bowring was prevented voting by a similar misapprehension. For my own part, I have no rancour against the Bishops, but on the contrary many associations and intimacies of an opposite tendency. But knowing that there is a strong feeling among the people, arising out of the Bishops hitherto having been among the staunchest supporters of war, the slave-trade, and misgovernment of all kinds, not unaccompanied by suspicions that the sources of their appointment have not always been of the purest nature, even to being open to the influence of ladies who (in Mr. Whittle Harvey's phrase) have "humbled themselves that they might be exalted,"—I do not see how one of the people's poor officers could do other than vote against them. At the same time the Whig ministry have it in their power to take down this feeling if they like. They will not do it if they merely appoint one another's tutors, respectable men it may be, and good at a quotation from the classics; but they would do it if they appointed men that fill up some space in the public eye, and who would make a barrier for good government instead of against it in the House of Lords. For instance, why has not Sydney Smith been made a bishop? has not he been working for the liberal side, ever since any of those preferred to him could say *amo, amas*? What has been done towards recompensing the liberal clergy of all ranks, who to their own manifest loss and hindrance have stood by the liberal cause in the worst of times? They may be as bald as an ostrich's egg; but still a man likes some symptom of recognition in his old age. If the Whigs chose to mend these things, I doubt whether they need be much troubled with motions against the Bishops.

The numbers on Mr. Rippon's motion were 53 to 180.



London, 30 April, 1836.

ON Wednesday the Marquis of Chandos brought forward his motion on Agricultural Distress; a declaration, to wit, that the agriculturists having had all their own way, and ruined the rest of the community by prohibiting foreign commerce in hopes

of appropriating the difference, have only brought themselves and their retainers to the necessity of coming to the House of Commons as sturdy beggars for more. "God's Judgments upon Murder and Adultery" in the Arminian Magazine are nothing to it; it is a living instance, working before our eyes, of the activity of a retributive Providence on earth.

The majority against the motion was not so great as I expected; being 208 to 172. But there were various signs in the House, of the subject making progress in the public understanding.

On Thursday the House was engaged in a variety of business of secondary importance, and was counted out at half past ten. I had an opportunity of risking the reproach of being a friend of publicans and sinners; on which point I have an old-standing engagement.

On Friday, the Registration of Voters Bill was gone on with in Committee. A motion by the Member for Finsbury (Mr. T. Duncombe) for preserving the right of voting to tenants who agree that the landlords shall pay the poor-rate, provided such tenants pay a rent not less than 10*l.* *plus* the poor-rate, was thrown out by the outrageous majority of 135 to 38. As this, like all the divisions in Committee, took place in secrecy, I cannot send you a list of the voters; but I should like to see the Hon. Member try his motion again on a distinct Bill. As an instance of the gross unreasonableness of the present state of things, a townsman sitting near me, the Member for Cambridge, told me he rented a house for 60*l.* a-year, and because the landlord paid the poor-rate for him, he had no vote. Query then, is my right of voting to depend upon possessing a certain degree of property as evidenced by living in a house of a certain rent; or is it in some way politically connected with my taking hold of so many dirty pennies in the pound, and putting them *meâ manu Pauli* into the overseer's box? To such strange absurdities will men agree, when a great public right is to be invaded or destroyed.

I yesterday presented the Petition from Hull received the same day, praying for the total abolition of the Stamp Duty on newspapers; and took occasion by the expression of the Petitioners, that the subject had "assumed a fresh aspect," to imply a hope that the subject would assume two or three more fresh aspects yet. The ministers have made a great blunder; and like the rest of heaven's creatures, they must be answerable for their own mistakes. If the people take up the question properly, they will be obliged to back out; and the quicker they perform that evolution, the better. Was it decent, after

the people had helped them to power and held them there, to come down to the representatives of the popular party and tell them, that they not only would preserve a penny Inquisition on the press, but that they would introduce the odious provisions of the Excise into every house that takes a newspaper, and tempt the man that brushes our coats, to turn informer on the contents of his master's pockets? If the other side of the House have a pint of the blood of the old Tories among them, they will join us in resisting this new Excise, as their fathers did the old one. The old Excise was to raise a revenue to establish a new dynasty; and it was only submitted to because the people were eager in the cause, and because the nuisance was limited to a certain number of trades. The new Excise is to be brought to all our hearths, to turn a penny for an ugly purpose. I wanted, long ago, to get thirty or forty men, including Irish, to engage to walk across the House upon some given question; and then this mischief would have been prevented. The newest plea of the ministers is, that they *cannot* carry the total abolition through the House of Commons. They made the giants first, and then they cannot kill them. From the beginning they were coquetting with the Tories,—tantalizing and tempting them to take up this ground. They must wait till they saw the surplus; they must hear what were the demands of other interests; glass they understood was in a bad way, and pewter not much better. What was all this but saying "Dilly, dilly, dill," come here and be helpful? And their next reason, which I heard the Chancellor of the Exchequer utter myself, was that they could not bring their consciences to make a man at a distance from town pay a postage for his paper, when a man in town pays none. Why do they make a man at Edinburgh pay thirteen pence for a letter, and one at Cambridge eightpence? Why do they not make the people in the country subscribe for the people of London, to equalize the price of mutton? Why but because every man is to pay the cost of bringing what he chuses to have? The truth is, they see that taking off the penny from printing, and laying what would produce an equal amount of revenue upon the postage, would enable the country editors to print their thousands, and this is what they are anxious to prevent. The proposal has been made to them, and they kick at it. Never ask me again whether the present ministers are the friends of the people or of public liberty, till they have retraced their steps on this and on the Flogging question. I advise the Radicals to try the case,—they can never have a prettier quarrel; and above all things not to give in, till they have got off the whole of the Stamp.

And how do you think the ministers proceeded to frame the rules of the Inquisition, that for the sake of their penny fee they are pushing to each of our fire-sides? They sent for the editors of the London newspapers, and asked them what amount of infliction they thought would secure them in their monopoly. Such was the information I received last night, from a Member not likely to be wrong. To day I find Petitions, ticketed a dozen, lying on my table; not altogether such specimens of calligraphy as were sent from Hull on the subject of Mr. Buckingham's claims, but with marks of haste about them which make it not unlikely the lion is going to give a roar. By the bye, I hope some of the electors' wives, will send me a pitcher of tea, when I go to prison, as they say I am to do, upon this business.



London, 4 May, 1836.

I TAKE the opportunity of introducing a subject to your notice, which has been for some time in my mind.

As you know, I have made a practice of sending down the Lists of Divisions on the day they are received, and of noting those Divisions which, being in Committee, were wrapped up in discreditable secrecy as concerned the names of the voters. And I have had occasion to know in return, that these Lists have been matter of no inconsiderable interest among our numerous friends. Wagers have been decided by them, touching the comparative attendance of different Members; and in various other ways they have been the sources of both information and amusement.

What I want to determine is, whether this practice could not be usefully extended to all the Votes and Proceedings of the House. A Member wants them on the first day; but on the second, there can be no substantial impediment to his transmitting them to his constituents. They form not only a record of what has been done in the House, but a notice of that which is to be done for several days, or even weeks, to come. With them in their hands, a constituency might not only look at the past, but might frequently prompt their representative most usefully as to the future. What everybody occasionally wants, is to have the spur stuck into his sides; it throws him on his haunches, and makes him carry his head well in the House. Besides, a representative, except where he is either a man who drives instead of following the public, or else is considerably gifted with conceit, has really no strength but as it is put into

him by his constituency. Could you not dispose of the Votes and Proceedings, in such way as to make them generally accessible to the three or four Liberal associations which exist in Hull, and to as many more on the other side of the question; if our adversaries can produce them?

On Monday the House was engaged in Committee with the Tithe Commutation bill; but stopped from weariness just as it reached the important clauses.

On Tuesday the Hon. C. Berkeley moved the adoption of the Report of the Committee of last session for the construction of a Ladies' Gallery; which had been lost by a minority of three, in consequence of the unfair and absurd method of division at that period practised in the House, and to which the Tories have now a notice of motion to return. Gallery carried, by 132 to 90.

The House of Commons has thus, by the perseverance of a gallant young aristocrat, been put in the way of being relieved from a stigma which attaches to no other representative assembly in Europe; that of conducting its debates in a manner which the debaters are afraid of exposing to the criticism of their families. It is proposed to prepare a portion of the present Strangers' Gallery for the reception of ladies; who it may be presumed will be admitted on previous insertion of their names in a book, under the nominal direction of the Speaker, in the manner now practised for admission to the benches in the House. In the new House of Commons great improvements will be at the command of the architect; and the most complete and respectable plan would probably be, to build a gallery under the name of the Speaker's Gallery, for the ostensible purpose of accommodating the Speaker's family, as is done for the accommodation of the Master's family in college chapels; such gallery having its entrance through the Speaker's house distinct from the other avenues, thereby allowing the ladies to enter under the safeguard of the Speaker's hospitality. It would be indecorous to suppose, that where a liberal appointment and splendid residence are to be provided by the public in return for being the ornament and organ of the House, any private judgment could interfere with a compliance with the wishes of the majority. A Speaker is as a flower of the field. But *the* Speaker is immortal, eternal in the chair; and it is to this Speaker the wishes of the House of Commons are addressed.

On Sir William Molesworth's motion*, only the *elixir* (which

* On the case of Lord Brudenell.

in Arabic is *al iksir*, the fraction that contains the strength) of Radicalism voted with the Baronet. The mode of judging I proposed to myself and friends, was by asking whether the Hon. Baronet would ever have been troubled for his motion, *if the individual removed from his command had been myself.* The numbers on division were 42 to 322.



London, 7 May, 1836.

On Wednesday the House was counted out at a quarter before eight o'clock, to prevent proceeding with the second reading of Mr. Buckingham's Bill for enabling the Inhabitants of Towns to make Public Walks.

On Thursday the House was counted out at half past four o'clock in the afternoon, to prevent the coming on of Mr. Grote's motion on the Ballot. I have heard there were a hundred Members in different parts of the House; but as nothing was going forward but private Petitions, there was little general interest to keep men together, and so advantage was taken of it.

Some of our friends may require to be told, that by a rule of the House, no business is to be done with less than forty members, if any individual chuses to notice the fact, and desire that the House may be counted. When this is done, and the number found less than forty, the House immediately adjourns; which is what is called being counted out.

In this way nearly half of the gone-by week has been thrown away as regards public business. The member for Greenock (Mr. Wallace) proposed that before the Speaker counted, the Division bell should be rung; which is as reasonable as in the case of any other Division. But this was refused. It is easy to imagine, that close attendance on the House may produce a school-boy delight in anything that makes a breaking-up for a holiday. But this feeling should be resisted when the business of the public is at stake; and probably will be, when public affairs are conducted on principles a little more like those which regulate private. And the same application of common sense would further direct, that when the House is counted, two Tellers should be appointed by the Speaker (who would naturally be the Member that demands the counting, and the Member that made the motion attempted to be suppressed), and the Members present should go forth into one lobby, their names being taken down by the clerks as they

re-enter, and published next morning in the Proceedings of the House as in any other Division, whether the number found be less than forty or not; with notice of the hour, and the name of the Member that called for the counting, and of the Member whose motion (with description of the same) was then before the House. Any Member of good standing, who would put a notice of motion to this effect on the proceedings, would carry his point in the end, and effect a great saving to the public business.

On Friday the Chancellor of the Exchequer brought forward his budget. There was a nominal understanding that the question of the Newspaper Stamp was to lie over for a debate of its own; but it was plain to be seen he was clearing his ground. Perhaps there may yet be a storm before him he does not expect. The point to pinch him on, is why he will not be content with a postage instead; and then it must out, that he dares not encounter the full light of the press, because his deeds are to be evil.

As a commencement of the plan proposed in my letter of the 4th, I have sent you the Votes and Proceedings from the beginning of the present month, and shall continue to transmit them from time to time, so that with a little sorting you will find yourself in possession of the whole. I shall only send such of the Reports and Bills as appear to have a bearing on some known interest at Hull; but any that may have been omitted, shall be sent on the first application made either through you or from private hands.

London, 11 May, 1836.

On Monday the President of the Board of Trade moved the Second Reading of the Factory Act Alteration bill. Several persons have expressed their surprise, that after decrying the Factory Act to the extent of my power, I should now have voted against the removal of one of its provisions. But the explanation is this. I opposed the Factory Act as a fraud upon the working classes, a tub for the whale, thrown out by parties who were engaged in supporting the Corn Laws and all kinds of restrictions upon trade, as the means of leading off the operatives from the true source of the whole distress. But when this mischief was once done, I confess I did not see very distinctly any motive I could afterwards have, for making children under thirteen, work twelve hours instead of eight.

That would have no effect in removing the objection which I had to the Factory Act. The manufacturing capitalists dwell upon the consequences that may arise from their inability to meet the competition of foreigners. But if they do not chuse to bestir themselves to prevent the meat being taken out of the mouths of our manufacturing operatives by the premium held out from year to year to foreign manufacturers by the operation of the Corn Laws, what use is there in their pretending anxiety for the scarcely visible crumb of increase to the evil, that may arise from factory children under thirteen being worked only eight hours instead of twelve? Their concern is altogether for a nonentity; and if the factory children like better, as I dare say they do, to work eight hours than twelve, there is nothing to make a reason why they should not have their way. I would go in the face of the masses, the rank and file, for a great object; and any confidence they may have in me, depends on knowing I would do so. But I will not for a trifling object; still less for none at all.

Sir Robert Peel made answer with a pun of the smallest. I hope I may never return him evil for evil.

The Second Reading was carried only by 178 to 176.

On Tuesday the House in Committee proceeded with the Tithes Commutation Bill; but only got through one or two clauses, stopping in the middle of the first that can be considered as of primary importance. Several Divisions took place; in which you would doubtless be gratified by knowing how particular Members voted. But this, by the pleasure of your representatives, is still a sealed book to their constituents.

I did not know till after the Division, that friends at Hull were interested one way or the other on the Dublin Steam-Packet Company. But it would have been of no use, as the Dublin men carried their motion by 106 to 65.



London, 14 May, 1836.

On Wednesday Mr. Hutt presented the Petition from the Younger Brethren of the Trinity-House at Hull, praying for reform of that body.

On Thursday an attack was made from the Tory side, on the mode of taking the Divisions in the House by which the public are furnished with Lists of the way in which particular Members vote. I have so often alluded to this subject, that I will do no more here, than claim the attention of the Liberals

throughout the country to the struggle that is going on, and assure them that the secret voting in Committee has so injurious an effect, both on the number that attend and on the zeal of individual Members to exert themselves in the public cause, that it would not be labour thrown away, if the people in places where political information is extensive, would petition for the privilege of knowing what their respective representatives may do or not do, in Committee as well as in other meetings of the House.

Mr. Clay brought forward his motion on Joint Stock Banks. My own opinion on the general question of which this is a part, is one in which I believe I have not many followers; though if I were to whisper to you that the head clerk at Smith, Payne and Smiths, says I am the man that has hit the nail on the head, you would perhaps think I should reasonably have more. If I have an opinion on this subject, it certainly has neither been lightly formed nor wantonly put forward; for I worked at it eleven years before I published it (in the First number of the Westminster Review, Article 'Instrument of Exchange,') and have been working at improving it from time to time, for eleven years since. My creed however is, that an upright government may take its choice between having a metallic circulation, or one of public paper which shall put the value of the metal into the public exchequer; but that it has no right to give away this amount to private manufacturers of paper, any more than to give away the tar out of the Dock-yards, or the beef and pork out of the Victualling Office. A private banker's business should be, to lend his own money and not other people's; and he *does* lend other people's every time he issues one of his own notes, for he takes the value of the note out of what the government ought to have taken for itself and put to the public account, and lodges it (it may be) in the four per cents, for his own private use and benefit.

You will perceive, therefore, that I have no more notion of the propriety of Joint Stock Companies being allowed to carry away what ought to go to the credit of the public, than I have of their being allowed to wheel the tar out of the Dock-yards. Whether the tar may be best wheeled away by public companies or private individuals,—whether, for instance, the carts of the one may be less liable to break down and spill upon the passengers,—is another question still, and to something like this it is that the public have at present arrived. Whether they will ever arrive at the other at all, may be uncertain; but there is a satisfaction in thinking one knows the truth, even though it may be yet at the bottom of the well.

The House afterwards went into Committee on the English Tithe Commutation Bill ; and the same subject formed the principal part of the business of Friday.

London, 18 May, 1836.

ON Monday the principal debate was on Mr. Roebuck's motion for taking into consideration the present constitution of the Executive and Legislative Council of the Canadas, for the purpose of rendering the same efficient to the good government of those provinces. This Executive and Legislative Council professes to discharge the same part in the government, as the House of Lords at home ; but with this remarkable difference, that the Council is entirely or mainly without those kinds of influence, derived from the possession of great property and hereditary rank, which may to a certain extent be pleaded in defence of the existence of the House of Lords. The object and substantial effect of the Canadian Council appears to be, to prevent the Canadians from having the power of self-government, or in other words preventing them from governing for their own interest, and forcing them to submit to be governed for the interest of somebody else. The struggle in Canada therefore, is only part and portion of the struggle which is going on all over the world.

The most remarkable circumstance attending the debate, was the attack made by a Tory Member on the propriety of Mr. Roebuck's holding the office of paid agent for the Canadas. No objection that I am aware of, was ever made to the West-Indian islands or Ceylon having paid agents with seats in Parliament. It is when one of these agents shows signs of taking up a popular cause, that the danger is protested against. The case is something like that of franking. There was no objection to franking, as long as the people had little or nothing to do with it in their political capacity. But when franks were found to be flying about to Political Unions and Reform Associations, the discovery began to be made that franking was a most improper privilege.

Mr. Roebuck's motion was finally withdrawn ; as was probably intended from the beginning. There is a certain class of motions, which may be denominated feelers ; as being designed to draw out opinions, and afford indications of the strength of parties, rather than to lead to any absolute conclusion.

On Tuesday, Mr. Morrison moved a Resolution for giving

Parliament the power of revising the tolls upon railways at stated periods. He afterwards withdrew it, for the purpose of substituting a motion. From the temper of the House, I should imagine the measure likely to pass.

The remainder of the evening was principally taken up with more of the Carlow affair. A motion for an Address for a Royal Commission to inquire, was negatived by 123 to 52.

London, 21 May, 1836.

ON Wednesday an occurrence was witnessed on occasion of the Over Inclosure bill, which is perhaps of some importance as a sign of the times. The bill was thrown out on the Third Reading, by two successive divisions of 64 to 61 and 88 to 84*, on the ground of its pressing hardly on the vested rights of the poor. The rich have so many ways of taking care of themselves, that no man's conscience need trouble him for having been concerned in these majorities.

The motion for the Second Reading of Sir Andrew Agnew's bill, entitled the Lord's Day bill, came on the same evening. There was a repetition of the old misrepresentation about "ridicule and ribaldry;" which I should mark as an instance of notorious bad faith and intention to deceive the public out of doors, if it was not soluble upon the principle formerly advanced, of the entire incapacity of the heated bigots who engage in this cause, to form a sound judgment on what passes in their presence.

The Liberal party on this occasion, or a portion of them sufficient to be effectual, adopted the absurd policy of allowing no argument upon the question from their side. The consequence was, that they had to endure with the patience of beasts of burden, all that could be advanced by the other party, without anything in reply. Every successive speaker on their side that made the attempt, they cried down; thus making a contest of brute numbers, of what ought to have been a victory of reason. It is painful to be obliged to march through Coventry in such company; and I wish I could give you the names of the inventors of this policy, that the public might determine the quality of their claims to be arbiters of when the public cause shall be defended and when not. The

* After the first motion, that the bill be "now" read a third time, had been negatived, the Tories took the unusual course of dividing again on the question that the Bill be read "on this day six months."

next time a Sabbath bill is brought before the House, I shall (with the leave of those whose leave is necessary) vote for the First Reading. We shall see whether the Liberal side is always to lie under the imputation, of being managed by those whose strength is in their throats and not their heads.

In the mean time I apprehend the right string has been stricken on, in disabling the capacity of the bigots to produce the authority they pretend. Our Protestant forefathers might have talked long enough, upon the impropriety of forcing one man's religious opinions on another. But they took a more substantial course. They said plain out, "The doctrine which you would force on us as being in a certain book, is not there at all. Your claim is founded on a question of black and white; and we deny that the words and letters to support you, are in the book from Genesis to Revelation." And this was the argument that told; not nice fence about religious liberty.

On Thursday the Irish Municipal Corporations bill was brought back with the Lords' Amendments. From what was said by ministers, I imagine their plan is to make a compromise of some kind;—to give up a great deal, on condition of getting a little. They tried to clothe this in sounding words; and by taking insulated parts of what they said, it might be concluded they intended to be stout-hearted. But the other, I imagine, will be the upshot of the matter.

On Friday Mr. O'Connell took his seat*, amidst great cheering. His first operation was to present a petition against the sitting members for Dublin; which gave rise to a debate, that was finally adjourned to the 30th.

The cloven foot has again made its appearance in the Tithe Commutation bill. A clause is proposed for diminishing the rate imposed in lieu of tithe, on ground now in cultivation of hops or as market gardens, which shall hereafter cease to be so cultivated; and for laying an increased rate on grounds, which now are not so cultivated, and hereafter shall be. Here we have the old mischief of tithes starting up again. The ministers have had resolution to get rid of it in the main; but hops and garden grounds were too good to be included. We must be oppressed by the system of tithes upon our beer, if not upon our bread. Perhaps as the ministers got into the difficulty without much knowledge, they will get out of it in the same way.

I take my leave till after the 30th.

* For Kilkenny; after being unseated for Dublin by the decision of an Election Committee.

London, 1 June, 1836.

ON Monday 30th May the Dublin Election Petition was withdrawn, after a debate which was tantamount to an acknowledgment that the charge of bribery against the Sitting Members remained unexamined and un rebutted, and an assurance from the Attorney General that the evil was irremediable under the existing constitution. Mr. O'Connell therefore loses his seat through a process which may not unaptly be compared to a game at back-gammon; where the adroit management of such parts as are under human control, is found in scientific combination with the throws turned up from time to time from the dice-box of a blundering Committee. Happy is the man, whom blind fortune and sharp wit thus play into each other's hands to steady in his seat.

In brief, it matters not with whom the fault lies, but Mr. O'Connell is unseated because the powers above would have it so. There has been no trial, or none that does not carry on its face the evidence of nullity. History tells of an individual, who had his eyes scratched out in one thorn-bush, and by jumping into another scratched them in again. We shall see when the blunders of a Committee will perform this inverse kind of operation in behalf of Mr. O'Connell.

On Tuesday the Member for Finsbury (Mr. T. Duncombe) brought forward his motion for an Address to the King, "to beseech His Majesty to use his good offices with His Ally the King of the French, for the liberation of Prince Polignac and others" late ministers in France. I am sorry to say cold water was thrown upon the motion to a considerable extent, by the part of the House to which I believe I am considered to belong. Had I conceived myself furnished with authority to represent the opinion of the Radicals, I should have taken the opportunity of stating the high degree in which the popular cause is everywhere advanced, by all that indicates the absence of vindictive feeling. That the people are born to be injured and deceived, is as true as it has sometimes been said to be of women. But such remedy as is within their reach, is by the exertion of caution for the future; not by the exercise of vindictive retribution for what is past, and what will not be the less repeated, if the caution, which is the true remedy, is omitted.

London, 4 June, 1836.

ON Wednesday the Order of the Day was read for the Second Reading of the Irish Church bill; and Lord Stanley moved as

an Amendment, "that leave be given to bring in a Bill for the conversion of tithe composition into rent charges, and for the redemption thereof, and for the better distribution of ecclesiastical revenues in Ireland."

Instead of going through the debates on this subject which are in all the newspapers, I will try to make a statement of the general question, for the benefit of such of our friends as love to take their politics in a small dose rather than a basin-full.

The main question, then, I take to be, whether the contributions in one form or other levied on the public for the support of religion, are to be expended with some degree of equality among the different sects and parties from whom they are levied; or whether there is to be a scramble for the whole cake, and it is to be carried off by that description of Christian professors, who happen for the time being to have the longest arms and heaviest cudgels. The Irish Church calling themselves Protestant, are the people who have at this moment got hold of all the cake; and the present dispute is, whether they shall give a little bit which is not wanted for themselves,—(mind I do not say, which they cannot eat themselves, but which does not appear to be wanted to keep them in health and wholesomeness),—whether they shall give this little bit, not absolutely to keep and feed the church of some of the other sects that pay for it, but to do something for their children in the way of education, as the least offensive mode of returning them a morsel of their own. And here the great fat children that have got the cake, bluster and roar, and declare that if the cake is more than they ought to eat, their Pa's and Ma's should have more of them to help to eat it;—that because they are not enough for the cake, and that even for some slices there is nobody at all, is no reason why anybody else should have any, but on the contrary is the very reason why the cake should be kept for those that are to be hereafter;—cake is not for the religions that exist and that have paid for it, but for those that are to be and ought to be, and therefore they will hold fast and squall.

Now it is quite plain that whenever the power gets into the proper hands, to be whipped and sent supperless to bed, will be the remedy which will set all these brawling babies to rights. It is only another branch of that question, which has been in the main so happily settled in respect of ordinary property. Is money to be expended for the benefit of the owners and contributors, or is there to be a scramble for it by the strongest arms? The question has been pretty well determined at common law; but a Church is an engine for setting up an exception to common rules.

Note too the extreme moderation with which the government has proceeded to aim at an indirect and fragmental bit of justice, and the fierceness of the opposition. The opponents fear, that if they learn *A* they must learn *B*; the doing of right is like the letting out of water, the owners of a wrong are always anxious to stop the earliest leak.

What I wish is, that it was possible, with a view to their own benefit and nothing further, to take the party that at present ride the high horse, and put them for one good twelvemonth in the situation of the people they trample on. Nothing but some process of this kind, will ever bring us to peace on earth and good-will among the different divisions of mankind. It is by rough lessons of this nature, that in law, and to an inferior extent in politics, men have been brought to the recognition of that rule for the common good, which goes under the name of *justice*.

After three nights' debate, the House divided at half after one on Friday night, or more properly Saturday morning. For the ministerial measure 300; for Lord Stanley's amendment 261.

London, 8 June, 1836.

ON Monday the *trop bons Catholiques* of the Established Church were labouring again in their vocation, of trying to pull down an old house upon their heads. Knowing as you do that I have no personal feeling against the sect calling itself the Establishment, I feel the greater freedom in addressing you without disguise; for which I shall probably be called "Jew, Turk, Infidel, and Heretick," according to the formula the Member for the University of Oxford was pleased to select, from the well-meant orisons of our forefathers, composed at a time when the theory of the thousand-and-one sects as the only true fountain of religious quiet was much farther from being understood than it is at present. By the way (but this is an episode) what would have become of O'Connell, if he had blurted out the word "heretick" as a reason for cutting a man off from his political rights? It would seem therefore, that one man's "heretick" is not as good as another's; so we may live in hopes of coming at the true "heretick" in time. And "heretick" after all, between ourselves, means only a man who "makes a choice;" so that our worthy forefathers prayed for "all Jews, Turks, and men that make a choice,"—an inviting prospect for religious peace, if we their successors, instead of

limiting our wishes to the conversion of all that "make a choice," were to insist upon doing battle with them till they consent to surrender their equality of privilege as citizens of a free state. The truth is that heretick is the old word for dissenter; and whenever the plan which has been sometimes threatened is carried into execution, of modernizing the Scriptures and the Common Prayer, the Church will perhaps be persuaded to pray for "all Jews, Turks, Infidels, and *Dissenters*," as more accordant with later forms of speech.

The object of the over "true Churchmen" in the present instance, was to cut off the remainder of the thousand-and-one sects from the benefit of civil registration, by declaring that great damage would ensue to the Church's ordinance of Baptism. Now, as a man puritanically descended, and accustomed from my youth up to the sound of religious controversy, I should like to know on what particular portion of either the letter or the spirit of anything left by the founders of Christianity, the Anglican sect undertakes to found a right of cutting men off from civil advantages, as the engine of increasing the number of baptisms. In the order to go forth "baptizing all men," I am sure you will find no mention of cutting them off from civil advantages if they decline. And I feel a strong suspicion, that great difficulty will attach to pointing out the period at which any order to that effect was inserted, as we should say, in the orderly-book. Did Peter do it, or did Paul? or if these did not, who did? And to go further, how do they establish the connexion between baptism and giving names at all? There may be reason for believing, that when the early Christians baptized a full-grown heathen, they sometimes gave him a new name, as a token probably of the newness of life to which he was called. But even this, it is plain, they did not always do. For among the names preserved in the writings of the apostles, are many, like Hermes, Nereus, Olympas, Silvanus, and perhaps Phebe our sister, which modern ultra-christians would have thought formidably heathenish; while Epaphroditus and Narcissus they would probably have *Bowdlerized*. And if they did not connect the giving a name with baptism in the case of the full-grown, still less have they done it in the case of the newly-born; for the question of infant baptism altogether, is one on which all the controversies that have taken place, have not discovered any precise direction or authority.

This attempt, then, to cut men off from civil advantages for the increase of baptisms to the Established Church, is another instance of that tendency of all things established by human power to run to mischief, which our forefathers thought they

were combating when they "protested" against an older church we wot of, and successfully carried their protest through. The modern church, like the elder one, might hold for ever if it would let well alone. But when a church's time approaches, it would seem as if it became what the Scotch call *fey*, and showed it by insisting on riding over the bodies of its neighbours. Men in these days must be governed civilly, not ecclesiastically; they will not submit to it.

On Tuesday the motion for confirming the Report of the Committee on Mr. Buckingham's claim, was negatived by 92 to 60. I am afraid Mr. Buckingham's claim, like many others, must lie over in that limbo, where unredressed wrongs wait for the deliverance that is to come.

London, 11 June, 1836.

ON Wednesday the House went into Committee on the Bribery at Elections bill. I vehemently suspect everything on this subject, which is supported by the side of the House that this is. The effect produced will be, to multiply the opportunities for bringing sham charges against the successful candidate, and thus subjecting him to the process of being "laid down and robbed at the door of the House of Commons," as happened to myself. There is not the slightest necessity for the charge to be true; there is not the slightest necessity that there should be the smallest intention on the part of any of the individuals who put it forward, to offer a tittle of evidence in support; they may come, as they did in my case, with a stinging knowledge of the falsehood of the assertions they have made, and be sickening all the way with the consciousness that they are to withdraw the moment the process arrives at the point of asking them for proof; but still, so miserably constructed is the Election law bequeathed to the existing House of Commons by its more corrupt predecessors, that a Committee has no option but to sit and be a party to the proceedings, to the point to which the adversary from the beginning intended to carry them. Everything introduced by the Tories, I apprehend will go to facilitate this process. At all events they will make the law novel, where it is now pretty well understood; we now know tolerably well when we are safe, and they will make it gloriously uncertain. It will be no matter to them, that decision should finally be given in favour of their antagonist; what they want is, the opportunity of stripping the antagonist before arriving at the decision. They want to have

the power of taking from him a thousand pounds for every thousand the Carlton Club may think proper to expend; and thus to bring the real question, to that of the longest purse. As one evidence of a feeling of this kind, they last night rejected, by a majority of seven, the insertion of a prohibition of payment of travelling-expenses; a practice which, though not of the nature of bribery, is one way of putting elections into the hands of the parties disposed to carry them by expenditure. For these reasons I cannot help likening the Tory proposals for preventing bribery at elections, to the plums described by honest John Bunyan as hanging over the walls of the devil's garden; and should not be sorry to see the chance of gripping pains to the incautious eaters, removed by the withdrawal of the bait,—which in the present case I have heard it stated is not unlikely to be the end.

On Thursday Lord John Russell moved the Order of the Day for taking into consideration the Lords' Amendments to the Irish Municipal Corporations bill; and it was settled that the contest should take place on the restoration of the 4th clause. After two days' debate the ministers carried their point by a majority of 324 to 238. Twelve men are understood to have come over; which gives promise of more hereafter.

Notwithstanding the repeated complaints of the exhausted state of the subject which were made during the debate, there were some points omitted which may usefully be stored for future service. For instance, nobody that I observed, hit upon the really weak part of the Lords' position in the contest they insist upon inviting. It may do very well for the purposes of speech-making, to represent the Lords as an abstract of the higher orders of society, and to claim the attention of the country and Europe to their opinion, as that of the aristocratical classes expressed through their representatives. But the naked truth is, that they are *not* such an abstract and *not* such representatives. There may be a portion of them that would answer to the description; but another portion, and that the active and decisive one, are a reserve, a *poire contre la soif*, a detachment of the best troops of the Tories and their descendants, put in garrison for the express purpose of holding out after the other posts should be carried by the people. They are what a garrison of the *Garde Royale* in the heart of Paris, would have been after the Three Days of July; or what a body of the adherents of Charles Edward would have been in the Tower of London. Men's opinions as to the positive desirableness of their being there, will vary according to the political predilections of the framers; but nobody will be found to say they came there as an abstract

of the opinion of the classes they were taken from. They may have come there by virtue of some past opinion; but at all events they are a past opinion domineering over a present. It might or might not be very well that the appointees of Mr. Pitt or Lord Melville should domineer in their day: but if they are to domineer now, it is at all events not by virtue of their being an abstract of the present opinion of the country. They are a redundancy and an excrescence on it; machines and instruments worked by dead men putting their hands out of their graves, to strike at the progress of reforms which the prime agents died resisting.

It may be quite true that the time is past, when the mischief might have been cured by the simple application of the constitutional remedy for such cases made and provided. There *was* a moment;—but there also was Earl Grey. It is given to no man, to cure by the remedy to-morrow, he ought to have applied yesterday. To the credit of the British constitution be it remembered, that there was a resource provided by it, which timely employed would have quashed the mischief. And this is not disproved because it will not quash it now. The constitution had provided a sufficient remedy, if used in time; it never undertook to provide against the possible chances of man's un wisdom and delay. A trivial scratch with the knife, scarcely leaving a scar behind, would once have let out the peccant matter, and restored the body politic to health. The tenderness of a prime minister for "his order," could not face the infliction of the minor suffering, and now the whole limb may be lost. Nothing truer was ever said by man, than that no creation can now set the lordly opinion to rights. But it *would* have done; and the knowledge that it will not now, is the first step to all speculation on what is to follow.

The supposition that an hereditary body formed out of the higher classes of society, can ever constitute a safe element in a free government, must be dependent on the further condition, that the formation of opinion in that hereditary body, and in the classes from which it is taken, has something like fair play. It was *not* fair play, to turn the scale by the introduction of a garrison of the anti-popular party, recruited from time to time and drilled by a century of misgovernment, and thus to repress and misguide the genius of the rising generation of aristocracy. Ill weeds grow apace; and it is nothing wonderful, that the crop which a few years ago might have been extinguished or neutralized by the introduction of some sixty or seventy new stocks, should now be past dealing with, by all that it is practicable to suppose attempted in that direction.

The evil therefore will go on, till it is cured some other way. And, as was stated, the knowledge that the Peers are not an abstract, or at all events not a fair abstract, of the upper classes, will be the reason why the public will not endure for ever, and why there will some time be a cure. What the cure will be, it is at least permissible to speculate upon. And here, it will *not* be in any popular commotion, or any single and distinct popular effort. The cry of a "crisis" is nonsense. We were all of us born in a "crisis;" have lived in a "crisis;" and shall die in a "crisis," leaving the world a "crisis" for our legacy. There will be no more of "crisis" than there has been hitherto. The age of "glorious Revolutions" in England is past. The thing will be done, in the same way that the reform in the House of Commons was accomplished. Popular opinion will grow, and get increased influence in its proper place the House of Commons. At last it will find itself strong enough, to bid for a ministry. Not a ministry that will speak valiant words now and then, and at other times turn round upon its supporters, as the present ministers have done in the case of the freedom of the press, showing themselves so many Cordovas, as much or more afraid of their own followers than of the enemy. But a ministry that will have at heart the carrying of the enemy's positions, and keeping them for the people; a ministry that will use one popular success as the means of obtaining another; that will cultivate the affections and the interests of the numerous classes of the community, showing itself among them as a good colonel does in his regiment, anxious only to be the honoured instrument of directing the general movement and advancing the general cause.

When a ministry of this kind appears, it will do much that has never been done yet, and leave undone much that has. Aristocracy will probably be at the head of it; for there is no intrinsic feud between the people and the better-informed part of their natural leaders. It is not so foolish as may be thought, to make way for a man because he has all his life worn epaulettes; it puts down many a dispute, and honest men are glad to show the example of submission for the general good. The object is, not to quarrel who shall lead, but to have somebody that will lead the people's way.

A Dissolution would do much towards such an end; and it is not in human power to defer a Dissolution long.



London, 15 June, 1836.

IN my last letter I tried to point out the weak, that is the weakest, point in the position of the Lords. But inde-

pendently of this, their whole condition is one of comparative feebleness. Strength can only be derived from two sources ; brute force, which is power in action,—and opinion, which is power, or if you will, brute force, in reserve. For what is called the power of opinion in public affairs, means only the power which opinion would have of bringing force into the field if pushed to that extremity. A criminal allows himself to be hanged without resistance, because public opinion directs it ; but the real explanation of the matter is, that he knows the same public opinion would bring forward an overwhelming number of supporters of the law if need were, and therefore he hangs quietly.

Now compare the quantity of interests connected with an average member of the House of Commons, with those which surround an average member of the House of Lords. The first is appointed after a contest which of necessity places him in the situation of a chief and leader of *somebody*, and those the majority of some particular town or district ;—to say nothing of the fact, that in the case of Members on the popular side, a bare majority may be considered as involving at least two-thirds of the good-will, the difference being kept down by the exercise of foul influences of various kinds. The appointers may chuse well, or chuse ill ; but there is no denying that the man they appoint, stands in something like the situation of an elective colonel, and that any attempt to put him down by violence, would at all events be a kick given to the majority of the regiment. Of this majority, there is not a man that has not in some sort pitted his credit upon his choice, and upon a certain degree of success to be obtained as its result. There is not one of them that has not had some honest interest of his own, or of his neighbours, or of both, which he wished to see compassed or secured ; and in proportion as this gratification has been procured for him by any particular representative, is his adherence to the individual. When political disputes run high, or in other words when men are conscious there is much to recover and to secure, the representative has further functions to perform. He has often to decide among the clashing opinions in the battalion, none of them perhaps absolutely bad or without a certain portion of foundation, yet requiring instant reduction to one course, on the part of the agent appointed to be the organ of the common effort. It is his business to soften feuds, to keep down rivalries, by showing how each party may advantageously exert itself for the general good ; to amalgamate those whom in his heart he may think disposed to go too slow, with those who would go too fast ; to temper the caution of the

one, with the fire of the other ; to encourage the zeal for every useful alteration, without affronting the honest friends of things as they are established ; and thus to produce the maximum of power, out of the elements committed to his charge. In the course of this, it is impossible that he should not render services to individuals, which though on his part only duties, are received as kindnesses ; and be gratified with instances of support, which though originating undoubtedly in the necessity for political union, carry with them all the flattery of personal attachment. In short the situation of an honest representative with a sound constituency, presents marked features of resemblance to that of a chosen leader at the head of a devoted following ; past all dispute the most powerful combination, for good or evil, which the history of mankind displays.

Imagine then that a House of Commons composed of members all involving more or less of the elements of power here described, was brought into what is called *collision*, with a House of Lords composed of members of the power and influence of an average peer. Fancy that there was a fair stand-up fight between the masses of interests that one would bring into the field, and the other. It is true that the House of Commons could be said to act only by its majority ; but so also would the Lords. It is true that the majority one way in the Lords, may be numerically and proportionally greater than the majority the other way in the Commons. But what chance would the balance of interests brought forward by the majority in the Lords, have with the balance that attends on the majority in the Commons ? And what in fact are the interests attending on the Lords ? They have the interest of the dependents connected with them in consequence of their possessions ; but the Commons have the same, over and above all the other sources of influence that have been ascribed to them. Setting these then to balance one another, what is the remaining power of the Lords ? It consists in a certain quantity of reverence felt for them as the representatives of gone-by physical force, not very much unlike the respect which may be paid to the descendants of a *quondam* native prince in India ; but sorely diluted in the main, by the consciousness that the greatest and most active portion of them do not come under this category at all. In a certain quantity of belief, that their education and position in society make them good judges of what is for the public benefit ; modified and reduced, of necessity, by everything which extends the belief that they are bad judges, and more fit on the whole to be taken care of than to take care of others. In a certain quantity of attachment to institutions merely because they are old, and

dread of improvements merely because they are new ; a sentiment well befitting the infancy of society, but weakening with every day that passes over our heads. Under all these circumstances, fancy the question fairly, resolutely, obstinately forced on the country for decision, whether the House of Lords or of Commons was to be the ruling power in the State. Calculate the number of individuals in any society and in all society, who would take one side and who would take the other. Examine the relative degrees of organization, of union, and of communication, under which they respectively exist. Take anything like an impartial and artist-like view of the whole case, and then determine what chance the Lords would have in an absolute collision like that supposed.

The truth is, that the Lords can do something, and not much; and that for every stride they attempt to take beyond their true point, they will fall back two. They might long continue to retard, to obstruct, and perhaps sometimes usefully to modify. But by snatching at the visionary gain reflected to their hopes; they will only lose the substantial possession which with moderation they might have kept. A mistake of the Lords upon the question of their strength, would be the grand desideratum for the advancement of democratic power.

Another deficiency, partial if not total, observable in the debate, was the want of repelling with sufficient force the intimation perpetually conveyed, that the formation of political power is an improper object of Corporate establishments. It is not true, that Corporations are established to regulate scavengers. They are established that they may be depositories of political power, and of power that shall be exerted for the good of the community and not against it. There is no doubt of their being fortresses; and therefore it is that the adversary wants to pull them down, when he can hold them no longer for himself. And therefore precisely it is, that the community, if guided by common sense, will insist upon another course.

From the Monday's debate it may be concluded, that the idea of further opposition at present to the Irish Municipal Reform Bill in the Commons, is given up.

On Tuesday the House restored a part of the clauses altered by the Lords in the Irish Municipal Corporation Bill. Mr. Sharman Crawford moved for the restoration of sixteen towns whose names stood in the original Bill; and Bandon was taken to try the question on. He was much pressed not to divide; but he persisted, and as I could see no just cause for voting against him, I found myself with him in a minority of 8 against 148.

London, 18 June, 1836.

ON Wednesday there was not a House; that is, there were not forty Members present at the hour appointed for the Speaker to take the Chair.

On Thursday night a discussion arose on the question of continuing the debate after twelve at night; and ended, I am afraid, rather in favour of the practice. This is one of the points, on which the House, when a resolute muster is made, can always be made to decide formally for the advantageous and reasonable course, though its practical leanings in the sequel shall seem to be all the other way. And it is not to be concealed, that some valuable popular Members join in the opposition to "the outcry made against what it is chosen to call Midnight Legislation." But the evil of "Midnight Legislation" is this; that it goes to put the party of popular resistance, into the situation of a sentinel who should be sixteen hours out of twenty-four on duty, in opposition to a succession of men who relieved each other as often as they pleased. Hence the sweet of the night, for jobs, was always after twelve o'clock. When the House had dwindled down to a sleepy and exhausted few, recalling in some points if not in others, the figures in Hogarth's Midnight Conversation,—then was the time for a concerted sally from the Club-house or the Opera. The House of Commons became the "Finish," where gentlemen of loose political lives and conversations made their last effort, on the chance that "Rigour now was gone to bed," or Joseph Hume "with scrupulous head."

And I apprehend the principle does not stop here, but may be extended to all proposals for increasing the time of sitting of the House. If the House of Commons were to undertake to sit eighteen hours a-day, the result would only be, that more and longer speeches would be made. And if it were determined to reduce the sittings to six hours, the thing that is to be done would be done, only with less waste of words. But the difference to the power and efficiency of the popular party, between sitting eighteen hours and six, would be serious and important; as may be illustrated by supposing the hours of sitting extended to four-and-twenty, a thing involving no physical impossibility, nor indeed any difficulty beyond the necessity for a relay of Speakers,—but which would evidently deprive the party of the people, of the advantage they now derive from being, as the complaint of their adversaries is, "always there."

In this view, the abolition of the old custom of keeping holiday on Wednesdays, is a thing to be regretted. It is a move entirely in favour of that portion of the House who do

duty by detachments, and against those who are to be always upon guard. A man who goes to the House once or twice a week on a call from the whipper-in, may have plenty of time to see his friends and pay his debts; his opponent who is to be there always, has hardly time for either.

Yesterday I was present at the Conference with the Lords; which appears to have received an unexpected interest to-day, from the assertions in the morning papers that there were deviations from previous forms. After the deputation from the Commons had taken their places, standing, round three sides of a table covered with a Turkey carpet or what might pass for one, the Lords came in, to the number of eight or ten, including one bishop, and sat down on a bench at the head of the table, against the wall, in the attitude, as it appeared to me, of men sore pressed for room; and as they sat down they put on their hats, an operation in no way remarkable, inasmuch as it is the custom in both Houses of Parliament for people to put on their hats when they sit down, and take them off when they stand up. When Mr. Spring Rice began to give utterance to his mission, the Lords stood up and took off their hats, and continued so till he had finished; upon which they faced to the left, and made their exit with the rapidity of men who are glad to have done, what it was hardly worth coming to do. I saw nothing in their deportment but what was proper and decorous; and if we can escape collision upon substance, I think we shall upon forms.

London, 22 June, 1836.

ON Monday the House went into Committee on the Stamp Duties. The Chancellor of the Exchequer persevered in adhering to every point of his unpopular and impolitic provisions. I term them impolitic, because everything which makes one division of the Liberal party view another as having turned round upon them after having had their assistance at the expense of great sacrifices in the common cause, is a violation of that prudence by which the ordinary affairs of men in society are conducted. The division, of 241 to 208, showed that a mere handful of the friends of the freedom of the press, (as it turned out, only 17), would have been sufficient to bring the Chancellor of the Exchequer to terms or throw him over. This in the eyes of some people may look very desperate; but *on ne fait pas des omelettes sans casser des œufs*;—which does not read quite so well in English, "There's no making pancakes without breaking of eggs." If a thing is wanted, the price of exertion

must be paid for it. It certainly is not absolutely for want of suggestion, that something of the kind has not been done; for I have for many weeks endeavoured, both verbally and in writing, to put forward a plan to this effect, in quarters where it might be likely to attract attention.

The mode in which the question has been conducted, you will perceive to have been highly unfavourable to the popular side. A debate is brought on, not whether there shall be a newspaper tax of a penny at all, but whether the tax of a penny shall be superseded by the removal of a tax on soap. At least this is the substantial effect of the proceedings; and cannot be removed by any nominal reservation which may exist, that the question of tax or no tax shall not be prejudiced hereafter. The question of penny or no penny, has virtually been begged. There are few instances on record, where the unrighteous Mammon of Toryism has come so opportunely in aid of the objects of the Whigs.

I yesterday submitted a Petition from the Radical Association and other inhabitants of Hull, in number above fourteen hundred, against the Poor-Law Amendment Act in conjunction with the Corn Laws, and other grievances; one not drawn up, it may be, in language to be held out as a model on similar occasions, but in language extremely likely to be the accurate expression of the feelings of the Petitioners. My business as the agent of the Petitioners, was to obtain for their Petition the *maximum* of attention in spite of its short-comings, and keep it in sight the greatest possible time. In this I was tolerably successful; for a Petition upon which eleven members speak, may be considered as worth eleven times as much as an ordinary Petition.

London, 25 June, 1836.

ON Wednesday a substantial step was taken on the road of commercial justice, by the equalization of the East and West India Sugar duties. That there was no good reason, why the people of England should not have cheap sugar from the East Indies if they could, was a truth which one might have thought should have made its way a little earlier. But why are not the people of England to have cheap sugar from the Mauritius* too?

* This was a mistake, founded on a report in a public print. The object of jealousy should have been Siam; see conclusion of subsequent letter of 2 July. The duties on Mauritius and West-Indian sugar were equalized some years ago.

The answer is an amusing one;—because the inhabitants of the Mauritius are of French origin. Let it be remembered then, if ever the people of England are invited to enter again upon the wretched trade of conquering foreign colonies, that one part of the bargain is, that they are not to enjoy the advantages that might be derived from them, and for that reason to wit, that the inhabitants are foreigners. Now fancy a single man or a small collection of men, Robinson Crusoe for example with his man Friday, setting out to conquer an island that produced capital sugar-canes, but with a resolution that they would not eat them if they could help it, because the inhabitants were foreigners. The staring absurdity there is in this, leads to the demonstration of the difference which exists in our case. In the example of Robinson Crusoe, the men that make and pay for the conquest, are also the governors who are to settle whether the sugar is to be eaten. In our case, one set of men are to be at the expense of conquering, but another set are to have the power of saying whether the sugar shall be eaten; and because they have sugar from other quarters which they wish to sell dear, they are to settle that we shall not eat of the new. We the payers do not govern ourselves, or for ourselves; but we lie tied and bound in the hands of other people, who fleece us for their own interest and not ours, as the sheep in a few weeks hence will be fleeced of their wool. Something, it is true, has been done, and is doing, towards curtailing processes of this kind and substituting wiser; but how tedious is the march of intellect in this direction, and above all how slow are men who must in their hearts know better, in joining in any general declaration against the folly to which we submit!

If the government did a good thing on this day in the case of the Sugar Duties, it did a bad one in supporting the piece of insolent injustice which goes under the name of Sturges Bourne's Act; always excepting the case, that the government keeps it up by way of directing popular attention to the desirableness of Universal Suffrage. The principle on which Universal Suffrage is abstractedly just, and which will necessitate the approximating to it as rapidly as the conciliation or disappearance of the interests opposed to it shall admit, is that when all have equal suffrage, the rich have precisely the quantity of influence which is their due, neither more nor less. Suffrage, is the right of entering into the great market of political influence; and to say that if all men enter equally, the rich will be defrauded of their due, is the same fallacy as to say that if all men enter the gate of the market equally, the rich will

be deprived of the proper influence of their wealth. The question is not of their entering, but of what their respective influence will be afterwards. A rich man; if he is not a bad man, can always carry with him the votes of some dozens; or it may be hundreds, of the poor; just as he can obtain the venison and pine-apple which may cost as much as a hundred meals of the poor man who enters by his side. And what would be thought of him if he maintained, that the only way for him to enjoy the privileges of his wealth satisfactorily was, that the poor man should be kept out of the market altogether,—that he should not pass the door,—that Universal Market-Suffrage should be considered as akin to treason,—that the man of farthings should be kept out, in order that Dives clothed in purple and fine linen, might make his money go farther in faring sumptuously every day? Yet this, through one illusion or another, is very much like the state of things which exists, but which of necessity will be altered.

Now if anything could hasten the alteration of a rule which kept the poor man out of the market to please the rich, it would be the addition of another rule which decreed, that of those who did enter, the guinea of the man who had two guineas in his pocket, should buy twice as much as the guinea of the man who had only one. And this is precisely the kind of thing which has been done by what is called Sturges Bourne's Act, and which the Parish Vestries Bill brought forward on Wednesday and put down by the opposition of the government, was intended to remove. That insulting Act; one of the slaves' collars slipped on our necks in the Tory times and which the existing government refuses to remove, gives to the voters in certain Parish Vestries a number of votes increasing in proportion to their wealth. A poorer man is to have one vote, and a richer is to have twenty or thirty; for to this difference at least, must the inequality be surmised to amount, which can produce the final result stated by Mr. Wakley, that "one-fifth of the population have a majority of votes over the other four-fifths."

Sensible people everywhere, see that such a state of things cannot last, and set themselves against it. The more numerous and poorer of its opponents, who as having the keenest feeling of the evil are probably the most active, go by the name of Radicals. Those among the rich who have the intelligence to foresee the inevitableness of change, and the virtue to resist the temptations held out to individuals in their situation to maintain an interest distinct from that of the community, are commonly called Whigs. The two together, make the mass which is

moving irresistibly to the conquest of every useful reform ; and the only matter of complaint, on which a man may be allowed to look sulkily upon occasion, is that the government denominating itself Whig, should be so often behind the tone of those who in the country are known by the same cognomen.

On Thursday came on Mr. Grote's motion for leave to bring in a Bill for establishing the Vote by Ballot. Why does Mr. Grote insist upon the phrase, " that Votes be taken *secretly* by the way of Ballot " ? In the first place, it is tautology ; in the second, the aristocracy when they employ the ballot, as they always do, for their own convenience, know better than to thrust forward unnecessarily the word which gives the cue to the opponent to revile. Truly the " children of light " in some degree maintain their old character. I took occasion, for the first time I believe in the House of Commons, to put in the strong facts displayed in the military law. Lord John Russell says voting is a trust, and *therefore* cannot be done secretly ; and there is staring him in the face all the time a law he has helped to pass in twenty successive years, by which men discharging the most serious of all trusts, are directed and obliged to give their votes secretly. Tell our friends to buy, borrow, or beg, a copy of the Rules and Regulations for the Better Government of His Majesty's Forces, and read in Article 90 the oath required to be taken by the President, Members, and Judge Advocate at General Courts Martial ; not forgetting to look at Article 88 for the Declaration required from Medical Officers constituting a Military Medical Board. These last, in addition to declaring that they will not disclose the vote or opinion of any particular member, declare in express words that they will not disclose or discover *their own*. No mention here, of the difficulty of a doctor keeping secrets from his wife, or any other of the common-places resorted to when the interests of the people are at stake. Doctors, when they wear epaulettes at least, are not people. A meek, defenceless Captain of Dragoons must be protected by the ballot, that he may discharge his trust with advantage to the public ; a fierce, independent father of small children in a pig-stye, is to be left open to all chances, that he may have the opportunity of showing himself a man. I surmise there will be another state of things, when the lions are the sculptors. In the mean time the cry is, that there is no demand of the people for the Ballot. There is nothing to be done therefore, but advise all who ever suffered from their vote being known, to set up their throats in concert. You see how the thing goes ; what the people bawl for, they will get ; and what they do not, they will go without.

Mr. Grote's motion was negatived by 139 to 88; and the year before by 319 to 146. The way to compare two divisions, is to bring them to a common term. Imagine the numbers on the late division to have been increased on both sides (preserving the present proportion) till the smaller term was 146, and the two divisions would have stood 231 to 146, and 319 to 146; or the two majorities would have been 85 and 173, one of which is more than double the other. So that the relative majority against the Ballot has in a single year come down by more than one-half. This says a good deal for the progress of the Ballot.

On Friday came forward the clause in the Tithe Commutation bill, by which the mischief of Tithe is to be preserved in the case of Hops and Market Gardens. Lord John Russell thought it an excellent joke, to lay the blame on the member for Middlesex; who it seems did (unfortunately, as I should say) go with a deputation of the owners of old garden grounds about London, to ask for a provision to release them from the full rate of compensation in the event of their land being wrought out. A man less pressed with infinity of business, and with more opportunity of concentrating his attention on a particular case, would probably have foreseen, that a strong force of hop monopolists and others was already weighing on the ministers, and that any appearance of his junction would be snapped at to authorize the re-introduction of the general abuse; for this clause has already been put in and out, how often I am not able to define. But all this makes no compensation to Lord John Russell for going down to posterity as the man who tried to get rid of the evil of Tithe and could not. He will be pointed at as the legislator who knew all the mischief of Tithe, but found hops and cabbages too strong for him. We were told that the object of the removal of Tithes was to secure a great benefit to the agriculture of the country now depressed by them. But it appears the agriculture of hops and gardens is to remain as it was. Every man who has land which he could profitably cultivate in hops or gardening if it were not for the institution of Tithe, is to remain as before. The Home Secretary has no bowels for him; he had a week ago, but since that, he has had a joke against Mr. Hume. Every land-owner therefore, who has land that may at any time be capable of improvement by garden cultivation,—which seems to include the owners of all land in the neighbourhood of great towns,—should lift up his voice or for ever hold his peace. The edict is gone forth against him, and there is very little time for getting it removed. His rivals and antagonists the owners of the old

garden lands, have been too many for him ; they have shuffled off the burthen from themselves in the event of their land being wrought out, and they have laid the burthen of Tithe upon *him*, by way of keeping him from engaging in uncomfortable competition.

London, 29 June, 1836.

ON Monday the unhappy clause in the Tithes Commutation Bill which preserves the misery of Tithes on hop and garden grounds, passed by a great majority, as always happens when the Whig government hauls down its flag before the Tories, and consents to be towed in their wake. The process of these demonstrations of debility, is worth observing. The government first gives out, that it is going to lay the axe to the root of some acknowledged evil ; and loud flourishing of trumpets takes place in the country to that effect. All men are wrapt in admiration of the vigour of the government ; and the good easy public goes to sleep in the conviction of its security. But when the Bill has got some three-fourths of the way through the House of Commons, the resolution of the government oozes out, and discovery is made that some petty clause has been inserted, at a period when there is no opportunity for rousing the attention of the country to it, and when indeed half the Members of Parliament who oppose it appear never to have heard of its existence till that hour ; and this miserable little interloper is sure to take away all grace and favour from the remainder of the Bill, like the cranching of a stone in plum-cake, or the flavour of onions where that savoury vegetable was not the thing immediately in request.

In the present case, there has been no general Commutation of Tithe. The Bill ought to be called a Bill for effecting a commutation of Tithe where it is least wanted, and withholding it where it is most. The thing is to do over again ; for the magnitude of the evil preserved will, as the country advances, be found to have speedily surpassed the expectation of the present time. It must therefore lie over for the appearance of that Radical-Whig government, which is manifestly at some time to supersede the Whig-Radical.

It is curious to observe, how under the existing state of things, the interest of the community at large, the great interest to which in comparison of amount all the other interests concerned are only a pitiful per-centage, is overlooked by all parties. We find nice discussions, and exquisite adjustments, of the ways in

which the opposing interests of the tithe-owner and the tithe-payer will be affected by the different arrangements; but nothing, or next to nothing, except perhaps in the speech of some abandoned Radical that nobody attends to, concerning that great interest which the country has in Tithe being got rid of in one way or another, and which is the real oyster in danger of being swallowed while the other parties are battling for the shells. In this case of hops and garden grounds, the important question was, whether the country was to have the increase of hops and vegetables which would arise from admitting the lands now kept out by the barbaric imposition of tithes. And this increase of hops and vegetables, the real prize the nation should have had its eye upon, is put down in cold blood, to suit the monopoly of the owners of old hop and garden grounds, and serve them at the expense of the owners of the new. These two classes are seen struggling for a penny, and the government settles it in the way that robs the public of a pound.

On Tuesday the interests of religious liberty had an escape almost fortuitous, from undergoing an operation of a similar kind. The government introduced a Marriage Bill, professing to make marriage a civil act, leaving all parties to confirm it by religious ceremonies as they might chuse; and it "uttered brave words at the bridge," against imposing on Dissenters the stigma (for the majority always intends it for a stigma) of submitting to any Test or making any Declaration. But before the bill had got through the House, it was discovered that the government with a *coup de plume* had insinuated a tiny test, in the shape of a Proviso imposing a Declaration on that small portion of Dissenters who may be for no religious ceremony at all. Nobody seemed to have any previous knowledge of the fact; and the mischief would have been consummated without alternative, if the powers that watch over Dissenting liberty had not dressed up a cloud for the Member for the University of Oxford, and tempted him to grasp at the plea, that as the government had consented to the invasion of every principle of its Bill in the case of these little Dissenters, it could in reason do no less for the great. This he urged with much force of language and precision of logic. But the Home Secretary took alarm; and being further pushed by the spirited assertion of the Member for Leeds (Mr. Baines) that he would as soon go without the Bill as see it debased by such a Test, he declared for expunging the objectionable Proviso. The Tories struggled to the last; and after the motion for imposing a general Declaration upon Dissenters had been negatived by 132 to 68,

and the tiny Declaration by 108 to 67, they divided on the question that the Bill do pass, which was carried against them by 104 to 54.

London, 2 July, 1836.

ON Wednesday Mr. Gillon moved for going into Committee on the Bill to enable the sellers of spirituous liquors to recover debts under twenty shillings; which was negatived by 52 to 15. I mention this, because I have a kind of engagement to parties at Hull and elsewhere upon the subject, and because I have the strongest conviction that all the efforts to make men sober according to law, have a tendency directly contrary to the end proposed, and are in a great proportion of instances only blinds for the purpose of averting attention from measures directly hostile to the improvement of the numerous classes.

On Thursday a matter was noticed, of trivial importance perhaps in appearance, but of more weight than it looks, if only because it goes forth as a specimen of the logic of the House. The servants of the House of Commons had been in the habit of exacting half-a-crown for admission to the Strangers' Gallery. This by a vote of the preceding night had very properly been put an end to. But was there anything like a *sequitur*, in posting up an order, that because the Commons were no longer to be shown like wild beasts by their own servants, the admission of strangers *gratis* was to be refused? Last week the debates of the House of Commons were held in public; clogged it is true by the exaction of half-a-crown. This week the House of Commons debates with a closed gallery, except so far as admission may be procured through the privilege of Members of the House. The Member for Liverpool (Mr. Ewart) with great justice complained of this; but without effect. I doubt whether in any other great house in the land, the discovery would have been made, that because the servants were to be stopped in the exaction of fees for admission, the channel of admission was to be cut off.

The most remarkable feature in the debate on the Lords' Amendments on the Irish Municipal Corporation bill, was the *dictum* let slip by the ex-minister and leader of the opposition, that the Lords were responsible "to God." He was manifestly aware, the instant after, of the consequences of the expression; and did all that man could do, with the aid of friends to cheer him in the right place, to qualify and soften down the obnoxious

phrase. But a *verbum emissum* of this kind, is and ought to be an *irrevocable verbum*. "Words," as Dr. Neverout says, "are the indices of our ideas;" and no qualification or addition will ever persuade the majority of the hearers, that the idea present in the mind of the utterer, was not of the same kind that is attached to similar words when used by Nicholas of Russia or Mohammed Ali of Grand Cairo. The Lords rule by right divine; and as our forefathers crushed and squashed the pretension to divine right in one branch of the legislature, so it would appear they have left to their successors the business of squashing it in another. The words were most fortunately unfortunate. We have double the light to guide our march, we had the day before. It is to put down the theocracy of the Second Estate, and substitute some good plain principles of earthly government;—it is to disable the "right divine of lords to govern wrong," as gone-by generations did to kings;—that the people of England are now summoned by the incautious frankness of the ex-minister.

On Friday Mr. Sharman Crawford brought forward his Resolution, "That it is expedient that Tithes, and composition for Tithes, in Ireland should cease; compensation being first made to all vested interests, whether lay or ecclesiastical; and that no man ought to be forced to contribute to the support of a church which is not his own." It was negatived by 51 to 18. I voted with Mr. Crawford, because it is painful to vote against that which is abstractedly right, however remote may be the chance of practical accomplishment; and because every vote, in the actual instance, might be considered as having a certain tendency to spur on the government, to exert themselves towards getting the question of Irish Tithes out of its present dangerous position.

The *Morning Chronicle* of this day, with somewhat more of violence than was necessary, demonstrates that I was wrong in assuming that it was Mauritius sugar which was to be prevented from coming to us as East-Indian. I was misled by a report of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's speech now before me, which contains the following words: "It would be necessary to provide that no East India sugar should be admitted into the country without a certificate of the origin of its cultivation, such a certificate as might easily be obtained. If the Mauritius was allowed to import coffee into this country there were other advantages to which they were not entitled." I find that the object of jealousy, instead of being the Mauritius, was Siam. I shall therefore endeavour to take an opportunity of showing,

that my parable of Robinson Crusoe is with a few alterations equally applicable to Siam.

London, 6 July, 1836.

I AM to try to show, that if one of our Hull sea-captains could take out a cargo to Siam and exchange it there for sugar, which sugar on his return could be sold for him by Messrs. Todd and Popple in the Market-place with a profit, there is not the smallest reason why this in policy or common sense should be prevented, to please the West-Indians or anybody else;—and if it is prevented (which will only be because the Siam sugar is cheaper than the other) there is a clear loss to the nation of the difference of price of the sugar consumed, in the same way as if it pleased our rulers to decree, that we might use the cheaper sugar, but upon condition that for every pound, the difference of price between it and the dearer kind was thrown into the Humber.

This may be “silly” in some places; but it is not silly on Dock-side, if Hull merchants, owners, masters, and seamen, could make a profitable voyage to Siam and may not. And whether we could trade from Hull to Siam or not, the case will serve for all the others in which our freedom of trade is interfered with on similar grounds.

The argument advanced against us, then, is briefly this. “The West-Indians are your countrymen; they are a detachment of your own flesh and blood, gone forth to gain a livelihood by toil under the tropic, and to extend the strength and commerce of the nation; and therefore you are bound to give them your custom, in preference to the Siamese, whose pig-tails nobody cares for.”

I will give up to this argument instantly, if it cannot be proved, that there is another detachment equally your own flesh and blood, whose custom and employment are dependent on your importing the sugar from Siam. But if this should be made out, I think you will allow that it follows, that whether sugar to the same amount of value is imported from the West Indies or from Siam, is a pure matter of equilibrium, a thing indifferent in the main, so far as patriotism is concerned; unless indeed it should ever be set up and proved, that one portion of our flesh and blood ought to be more dear and precious to us than the other.

Suppose then in the warehouses of the highly respected firm

just mentioned, (who, I fear, on recollection, live only in the memories of their countrymen; but I once helped to bring a cargo of currants for them from Zante, so their names were naturally impressed upon my mind), there stood to the value of 100*l.* sterling of West-Indian sugar, and to the same value of Siam. Examine narrowly, whether British interests have not been promoted just as much by one as by the other. When our eminent grocers paid for the West-Indian sugar, they put a profit into the hands of a West-Indian Briton, and the remainder he paid away, or which comes to the same thing had paid away already, in the shape of food, clothes, or support in one way or another to divers kinds of labourers, and in purchase or payment for various kinds of tools, machinery, and raw and manufactured articles, incidental to the processes concerned. And when they paid for the Siamese, did not they put exactly the same sum into the hands of some other kind of Briton, to wit the merchant, it may be at Manchester or Sheffield, who advanced the cargo forwarded to Siam for purchase of sugar; and did not this merchant keep a profit for himself, and pay away the remainder, or else had paid it already, in the shape of food, clothes, or support in one way or another to some other kinds of labourers, and in purchase or payment for the various kinds of tools, machinery, and raw and manufactured articles, engaged in the processes of getting up the cargo for Siam? And are not the values concerned in the two cases precisely equal? If it was proposed that next year there should be no West-Indian sugar bought, but a double quantity of Siamese, would there not be joy at Manchester or Sheffield in all the departments concerned in the trade to Siam, the merchant included; and equal grief it may be at Liverpool, in all the departments concerned in the West-India trade, the West-India owner included? And if the change were the contrary way, would not the grief be at Manchester or Sheffield, and the joy at Liverpool? The fallacy is in keeping out of sight, that if the Siamese trade is put down to please the West-Indian, somebody is injured in one place to exactly the same extent that anybody is benefited in another; and that the people whose injury is thus kept out of sight, are the people interested in getting up the goods which are to be sent to buy the sugar in Siam. If (which may be among possible things) the people injured on the one hand, should be the same identical people that are benefited on the other; in other words if it should be exactly the same thing to them whether they work for a trade to Siam or the West Indies; we still come at the same result, which is that it does not make a pin's difference to British interests in the aggregate, and that

consequently all the outcries about the justice and propriety of putting down this trade and giving "protection" to that, are only so many efforts to serve one man at the expense of his neighbour.

The way in which attention is distracted from the interests at Manchester or Sheffield which form the counterpoise to the interest of the West-Indians, is by directing notice to the fact that Siam would gain, from which it is rashly inferred that Britain must lose. Perhaps something may be done, by placing the scene a little farther off. If it were possible to send cutlery to the moon and receive sugar in return, would anybody say "Don't give custom to the Man in the Moon, for it will do him good, and therefore Britain harm." Would it not be found out, that this was no better than the argument advanced in some Parliament of our forefathers, where a member prayed the immediate stoppage of a trade in lean Irish cattle to Bristol; for, said he, "the Irish would not do it if they did not gain by it, whence it follows that Bristol must lose." Would it not be found out, that the real dispute lay only between the West-Indians and the cutlers for moon exportation, and that the gain of the Man in the Moon was no more evidence than in the case of Bristol? The gain of the merchants in Siam has just as little to do with the question; except so far as it may by possibility promote in the end the making of better and cheaper sugar in Siam.

Or, to return to my old illustration as was promised, suppose the question were whether Man Friday should go forth and establish a sugar-plantation upon the continent, and send his sugar for sale to his master's island after the mouths upon it had multiplied by various chances as recorded,—or whether he should stay at home and employ himself in creating knives out of old iron, for which the wonderful discovery of the grindstone gave him great facilities, the demand for the said knives being such as to induce the surrounding natives to send sugar to market at exactly the same cost of toil to tradesman Friday. Would any man be found to say it was of the slightest consequence which of the two courses was pursued; or that if in process of time sugar was found to be obtained cheaper in one way than the other, the smallest perceptible difference of price would not be good reason why Crusoe if he was wise should decide the employment of his friend and subject in that way in preference? Or if Friday had already gone out and established himself as a planter, but his kinsmen by making knives were getting sugar to market at home at a cheaper rate than he,—would Friday have the smallest chance of convincing his

master, of the duty of "protecting" him in his colonial occupations, by putting a stopper on the proceedings of the rival sugar-men at home? Such political economy may do for the House of Commons, but would not do for a man like Robinson Crusoe who had his wits about him to look after his own affairs.

The Siamese sugar could only continue to come in, as long as it was as cheap or cheaper than the other; for if it was not as cheap in proportion to its goodness, the other would be voluntarily used in preference. And if it happened to be convenient to a Hull merchant, Hull ship-owner, or Hull crew, to import such sugar and they are prevented from it by law, they are wronged in the same manner as if money was taken out of their pocket because their name was John, and given to an individual whose name was Thomas. Men join together and form governments, to hinder injustices of this nature, and not to lay them down by Act of Parliament. And if in addition to stopping one man's honest trade to please another, the consumers of sugar are made to pay a higher price for the sugar they eat than they would have done if trade had been free, then the difference of price of all this sugar is lost and taken from the nation without any compensation in the aggregate, as completely as if by Act of Parliament it had been thrown into the sea. For nobody believes that the consumers if they had been let alone, would not have laid out this difference of price on something and somebody, to whom and to their dependents the benefits of this custom would have been just as great as the benefits to the sugar monopolists and their dependents when it is given to them per-force. So that the winding-up of the whole is, that in one case the consumers of sugar get nothing for this difference of price, and in the other they do; all the items besides, being found in the aggregate to balance. And this my High-Street knowledges tell me, amounts to the nation losing the difference of price as if it was thrown into the sea.

You see then what an opening we have in prospect, when we can get rid of the regulations invented to give one man money out of another's pocket, with a loss to the nation in its quality of consumer besides. And if I have done anything here to make this clearer, you will say there was not much to regret, in having been led by a wrong report into a belief that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was thundering against Mauritius sugar, when he was thundering against Siam.

On Monday came on in Committee the Appropriation Clause in the Irish Church bill. This is the sorest pinch of all; and

ministers were not particularly successful in their majority, which was only of 290 to 264. Their last majority on the same subject I understand to have been 34. They have had some losses by county elections since; and there were some absences, but nobody gone over. So that upon the whole I believe the question is considered as standing mainly where it did.

It is impossible to pass over this Division, without noticing the wretched impolicy of such an important decision taking place without publication of the names by authority, merely because it took place in Committee of the House. Even the Tory newspapers cry out against the practice.

On Tuesday Mr. Plumptre's motion for an Address to prevent religious intolerance in the Army, was lost by 44 to 38. Four men coming over would therefore have carried it. It is impossible in looking over the list of the Division, not to see more than four men whose vote against the motion can only be accounted for on the supposition of imperfect understanding of the question,—and not to think of the names of several leading Tories and professors of religion, like Brutus's statue, by their absence from where they ought to have been seen.

London, 9 July, 1836.

On Wednesday the House was counted out at an early hour.

On Thursday the same was attempted twice, but failed. A curious circumstance was reported to the House by Mr. Wilks; namely that the Proviso for imposing a Declaration on certain Dissenters, which had been struck out of the Marriage Bill, had re-appeared in the other House, and was in the printed Proceedings of the Lords. On inquiry it had been ascertained, that in engrossing the Bill after the last alterations, the Proviso was inserted by mistake. I believe everybody thinks that mistakes of this kind always take place against his own side. The House finally determined to wait till next day, to look for a precedent.

On the next day (Friday) Mr. Wilks announced that he had found two or three precedents; and thereupon a Message was sent to the Lords, announcing the misadventure. The Lords engaged to send an answer by a messenger of their own.

On the English Church Bill, the Amendment to prevent the translation of Bishops, was negatived by 124 to 44.

The Shipwrecks Committee is going forward, with prospects of good results. I shall be glad to be the means of promoting any representations from Hull.

London, 13 July, 1836.

ON Monday the House proceeded with the Report on the Stamp Duties Bill. The Chancellor of the Exchequer denied in the most unqualified manner, that the Bill was intended to impose additional restraints upon the freedom of the press; only he must have the means of enforcing the duty the government determines to impose. Now I maintain, that the introduction of new and grinding severities, for the purpose here designated, *does* constitute additional restraints upon the freedom of the press. Every instance of grievance, suffering, or insult, to which the public is exposed in consequence of the determination that there shall not be a free newspaper press, is an additional departure from the natural and happy state which is intimated by the term of "freedom of the press." The Chancellor of the Exchequer's *cheval de bataille* appears to be this;—"It is settled that there is to be a tax; all efforts to secure the payment of that tax, however violent, are part of a different question, and have no connection with the other subject." This reasoning reminds me of a scene I witnessed thirty and odd years ago at Venice; and I think an old friend and shipmate, then holding the rank of second mate and carpenter, whom I saw at the Hull election, was with me at the time. A boy went through the fruit-market flourishing a switch, and every now and then jerked a pear from a stall. While we were wondering what this might mean, a second boy appeared, and quietly gathered up the pears. The Chancellor of the Exchequer's determination to support the law, is the second boy. A bad law is made first; and then he appeals to the public for the necessity of supporting it. He overlooks the fact, that there are many of us who wish him failure at either end, and by either half of his process;—who believe that the only practical limit to bad laws, is the sufferance of the people, and who would rejoice greatly if on this point the Chancellor of the Exchequer should be mistaken in his calculations. It is astonishing how constantly public men part with the greater good for the less, the substance for the shadow. Here is the government calling itself Liberal, putting it out of the power of its friends among the people to represent it as other than a voluntary extinguisher on public knowledge; offending those who would willingly be its supporters, not less by the manner than the matter of its

déterminations ; accumulating unpopularity from sources which it might have been supposed the first business of statesmen to avoid ; offering itself as proof and example of the impolicy of our allowing one part of the Empire to be treated as "aliens in language, aliens in religion, aliens in blood," in order that what a Tory Government sowed, their successors may reap, and give us the benefit of the harvest. The mode of enforcement is to be imported upon us from Ireland. This comes of allowing Ireland to be made an experimental garden of misgovernment. The Irish law is to be transferred here, and we deserve it ; or shall deserve it, if the Irish law and the rest of the injustices to Ireland are not sent before long into oblivion together.

On Tuesday the government ran into an impolicy of the same kind in a small way. A clause was moved in the Committee on the Established Church Bill, for "empowering the Commissioners to make regulations by which no Clergyman, not fully conversant with the Welch language, shall be appointed to any See in the Principality, nor to any Benefice in Wales, the inhabitants of which are not acquainted with the English language." And against this very reasonable demand, the leaders of the government contrived to be in the minority of 64 to 74. Surely no establishment was ever so ill cared for as the Church of England. Neither the Catholics nor Methodists ever think of conducting the cure of souls through an interpreter. The Church of England alone can tolerate such wasteful processes.

London, 16 July, 1836.

ON Wednesday the House went into Committee on the Hackney Carriages (Metropolis) bill. The motion for going into Committee was opposed by Mr. Warburton ; but in consequence, as I imagine, of the resistance being made at the wrong end, or *before* members had got warmed by consideration of the Bill instead of *after*, he had only 2 votes against 118. For all this, it is not improbable that there will be an effort made to throw out the Bill ; for it contains many clauses derogatory to the comfort and respectability of the poorer and middling classes. The fact is, that the people who ride in carriages of their own, never know when they put scorn enough upon the people who do not. They would never tire of loading them with badges, and tickets, and nomenclatures, before, behind, and round about. At last Mr. Wakley stood up, and moved that all private carriages should carry the names of the owners, in letters of like dimensions, ground, and colour, as

proposed for hired carriages ; upon which the Member for the University of Oxford demanded that the House should be counted, and so the House was adjourned at half past eight. Some men think, however, that there is an end of the Hackney Carriages bill for this session.

On Thursday the principal debate was on the Established Church bill ; and though much was not done, much was said, which may lead to doing hereafter. The reading of the Amendments was opposed by 43 against 90. A clause to preserve 10,000*l.* a-year to the Bishop of Durham, was negatived by 133 against *nobody*. To understand this, it must be recollected, that the Tellers, who are in fact the mover and seconder, are not counted. The member for Liskeard (Mr. Charles Buller) moved a clause, which he supported with great eloquence and power of reasoning, that " until provision has been made for the adequate payment of the parochial Clergy, and for the supply of religious instruction to those parts of the country stated in the Reports of the Commissioners to be destitute thereof, the Archbishop of Canterbury shall receive 8,000*l.*, the Archbishop of York 7,000*l.*, the Bishop of London 4,500*l.*, and the other Bishops 4,000*l.* per annum." And this was supported by 44 against 82. These may be considered as among signs of the times. But I believe a Liberal ministry might at any time quell the storm, by bringing forward men of really popular opinions as the heads of the Church. It is hard to say why a Reform of the House of Lords, as far as it goes, might not be made in this way as well as in any other, And a Reform, though to the extent of only one in twenty or thirty, might be made without preventing the Reform of the remainder in any other way.

On Friday Mr. Clay's motion for referring the Petition on the Danish Claims to a Select Committee, was negatived by 59 to 51. On looking over the lists of the Division, you will easily distinguish four or five names whose votes are to be regretted ; and they would have been sufficient to carry the question the other way. The Danish Claims must lie over, for that government to come we have sometimes dreamed of.



London, 20 July, 1836.

THE most important business on Monday was the further consideration of the Stamp Duties Bill in Committee. There is no denying that a great many of the most prominent violences in the Bill are omitted or softened down ; whereon the query will

arise, upon what principle within the whole range of a statesman's craft, were these points inserted to be softened down? It is like giving a lively animal a blow, for the chance of making it up with him afterwards. Some people will think there might have been a better calculation made, of what could be attempted and what could be carried through. Upon which I am afraid the truth is, that the people of England is *not* a lively animal. At all events, it has not been treated as if anybody had the fear of it before their eyes.

A question arose, whether the English Stamp duty on newspapers should not be reduced to Three Farthings like the Irish; and the Irish Members, or such as were in the House, voted against us. O'Connell if he had been there, might from his previously expressed views on the subject of the Corn Laws, have been expected to take a different course. If there were exceptions, I have not heard of them; and the wretched custom of concealing the votes taken in Committee, prevents me from having recourse to any list. Now it would be improper to represent the Irish Members in this, as guilty of any unparalleled enormity; for Englishmen might easily be found to do the like upon occasion. But there is nothing to prevent remark, of the extreme poverty of the reason for which Englishmen are to pay 33 per cent more tax. They are to pay it that Irishmen may be obliged to read bad newspapers; that is, worse newspapers than they would do if the tax was absent. For it is evidently part of the assumption, that Irishmen would prefer English newspapers if they had their choice;—that the tax must be increased 33 per cent to hinder them from doing so. Englishmen, therefore, are to have their tax increased 33 per cent, not that the Irish may have good newspapers, but that they may have bad;—not that the Irish people in general may receive a benefit, but that they may receive a mischief, to wit by every one of them being deprived of this 33 per cent in the value of his newspaper;—that they may be made to read the bad newspaper which they would fain avoid, unless they like to pay this 33 per cent more for the better newspaper which they might have had at the same price. And all this, is to benefit—whom? Not the Irish people, for they are to lose this 33 per cent in the quality of their article. Not the English people, for they are to pay a tax in order that the Irish may lose. But certain printers and publishers in Ireland, who want to print and publish bad newspapers and escape from the competition of better. And this is called “protection to the press of Ireland.” Such a poor naked thing does “protection” turn out everywhere when looked into.

On Tuesday the most important debate that arose was on the Established Church Bill. Mr. Hume, followed by several other Radicals, attacked the Bill as a measure of only colourable reform. Lord John Russell made a very stout defence. He said the measure, though it might not go so far as he could have wished, was one that implied a great concession by the other party;—a concession such as in former years had never been heard of;—a concession too, which could be carried with the concurrence of those from whom opposition to other reforms was to be expected. He intimated also (though this is a topic on which it is always politic to touch lightly, unless a man is anxious to raise up opposition to his own plans), that this step in reform involved no pledge against any other. On the whole, my impression from his speech was, that there is a great deal to be said upon both sides; and if he speaks again on Friday, I should not wonder if he brought me over. We Radicals shall have cause of complaint enough against ministers, not to want to quarrel with them where it can be helped. If the fact is, that public opinion has made such enormous alteration in the state of things that men are obliged to give their full consent to partial reforms which a few years ago they would have resisted as monstrous and insufferable, it does seem policy to take advantage of their disposition quietly. It is what your Hull sailors would call, taking in the slack; because it is the slack, are we not to take it? My advice therefore is, to “take in the slack,” and then “heave and pull.” Whether it be little or much, it will never be got back again. And we shall not be the worse for it when the time comes, for urging our friends and allies to heave in a little more.

On Wednesday (this day) there was no House.



London, 23 July, 1836.

On Thursday there was a wearisome and fruitless debate on the plans for the new Parliament-houses. A million, or perhaps two, are to be spent to give gentlemen who do not pay for it, the pleasure of thinking they have raised a building “proportioned to the greatness and glory of the country;” which mean their own. I have held architecture in suspicion, ever since I saw the Pyramids. It is always a proof, that there were one set of men who planned and amused themselves, and another set who paid. Examine any country or age, and in proportion to the servility or corruption of the people will be the splendour of the public buildings. Sometimes the presi-

ding power has been religious, sometimes political ; but it is always manifest there has been a caste, which has had the faculty of taking the people's money, and giving them a stone.

The site too, is likely to be the worst that could be discovered, namely the old one. Sir Robert Peel is of opinion, that the House ought to be on the circumference of the circle and not in the centre, because exercise is good for man and beast. More romantic gentlemen are enraptured with ancient recollections. It might have been thought that these would have in some sort balanced. If a man is overpowered by the popular grandeurs of the Civil Wars, that ale-born business the Restoration is at hand to moderate his ardour. If he is hurried away by the Glorious Revolution, there is Sir Robert Walpole, with the American and French wars in his train. Or if his loves and hates are all reversed, there is still the same unhappy alternation, to reduce his enjoyment to a *caput mortuum*. But perhaps it is Guy Faux that turns the scale, and hallows the spot to the antiquarian legislator. I wonder how many Acts of Parliament will be mended by these recollections ; and what would be the discount of deterioration, that would arise from a mile's difference in latitude or longitude.

In the Committee on the Newspapers Postage bill, great efforts were made from various quarters to induce the Chancellor of the Exchequer to give up or modify the absurd rule that says a newspaper shall not pass if a paragraph is marked down the side to attract the attention of the receiver. It would be a total misrepresentation to say that anybody asked him for any diminution of the Post Office revenue ; but merely for the abandonment of that gratuitous tyranny which oppresses literary and political communication without advantage in any quarter. But he was a deaf adder that stoppeth its ears ; and I do not believe that even the proof that the revenue was injured by the diminution of the purchase of newspapers, would weigh against the technical habit of believing that all that does anybody else good, must do the revenue harm. Surely individuals so far advanced in knowledge and liberality as the country Whigs, must see how they are discredited by this kind of narrowness ; and must be preparing themselves in secret for the advent of a government which shall make the public convenience the measure of its policy.

On Friday there was a meeting of the Liberals in Downing Street, on the subject of the Church Bill ; ending in all classes determining to maintain their several opinions as before. There was no breach of the peace ; but there was no union. And when the meeting was adjourned to St. Stephen's, the Radicals

refused to enter, and there was no House. This at all events to a certain extent obtained their object, which was delay.

London, 27 July, 1836.

ON Saturday the House met, for the purpose of adjourning till Monday. If there had not been Members enough to make a House, I am informed the process must have been repeated on Sunday, and so on from day to day till a House could be obtained. The friends of the Speaker therefore probably made a muster in defence of his Sunday's dinner.

On Monday the Stamp Duties on Newspapers Bill passed, by 55 to 7. I do not know whether it ever occurred to you to be afraid, that nothing should be left for future Reformers to do. If it has, here is an opening charitably left, which by itself is sufficient to set up a new ministry in business.

The Newspapers Postage Bill was read a third time, and passed. Renewed efforts were made to obtain some modification of the unreasonable rule which charges newspapers a prohibition price at the post office, if a paragraph is marked to attract the attention of the receiver. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, if I understood him rightly, signified that in practice the rule should be modified so as to allow of Members of Parliament receiving newspapers with such marks, but he must have the whole letter of the law on his side. How long is it, that Liberal governments have asked to be trusted with bad laws, on condition that they broke them? And what security have we, that somebody shall not start up, who shall stand upon the imperious necessity of executing the law; as was in fact, if I mistake not, done a few weeks or months ago by the Secretary to the Post-office on the very point in question. See also, how valueless is the quantum of liberty accorded. To be of any use to Members, they must have not only the power of receiving papers, but of sending; for the cases where an active Member wants to receive, are few in comparison of the cases where he wants to send. And why is the privilege, such as it is, to be confined to Members? I long for the day, when the lions shall be the sculptors, and the people shall really constitute themselves the judges, of what is for their own interest and what is not. We shall see a strange sweep of revenue laws, constituted to obtain a shilling for doubtful purposes at the expense of a pound in convenience and profit to the people, whenever that day arrives.

Take now my own case. I used to order a dozen copies of a London newspaper for the sake of some paragraph contained in it, and send these to the same number of country newspapers, who reproduced the paragraph. And I should not be wrong in saying, that I received at the rate of nearly half a dozen newspapers a-day from the country, for the sake of these or other paragraphs contained. In the whole course of this, I can say distinctly, that there was no one occasion on which the sending a letter to the post was prevented, or on which the transmission of a letter would have been produced by the omission of the newspaper. All these papers paid a stamp duty to the government; and this is to be cut off, because a grocer's apprentice once attempted to correspond with a milliner's, by sending a newspaper with the letters of "My dearest love" marked underneath with dots. The attack is not against loss of revenue, but against political communication; and it springs from part and parcel of the same fear, which dictates the refusal to accept a postage on newspapers instead of a stamp duty.

On Tuesday the member for Kilmarnock (Dr. Bowring) submitted a Petition from an individual in Scotland, who had been deposed from the rank and dignity of an Elder of the Kirk for the crime of having taken the chair at a public meeting whose proceedings were not in unison with the interests of the powers ecclesiastical. Scotch Members hereupon stood up one after another, and talked of what their fathers had conquered with their good broad swords. I suppose their fathers conquered the right of being bullied by their clergy. The Petition ended by being withdrawn; I cannot tell exactly why. The attempts at denying the power of the House of Commons to interfere, reminded me of a story that used to be current of a near countryman in India. The commander of a field force near the coast, found himself without medical assistance, and in consequence engaged the services of the surgeon of a country ship. Our friend, as usual in that employ, had brought out an assortment of articles for sale on his own account; and it was announced to the commander of the force, that his surgeon was selling pen-knives in the bazâr, which was *infra dignitatem*. He remonstrated; but the doctor answered in our good East-Riding accent, "I tell you what, colonel; if you *waun't* let me sell *my* knives, I *waun't* look after *your* sick." And he beat the colonel.

Now if the Scottish Kirk won't behave herself with moderation on the subject of public meetings, we won't look after her wants the next time she comes for a grant from Parliament. And

so I think we have her in our power, as completely as the doctor had the colonel.

London, 30 July, 1836.

ON Wednesday the Lords' alterations in the Prisoners' Counsel Bill were taken into consideration. The Lords have struck out the clause which enacted, that if after the close of the case for the accused, the counsel for the prosecution shall make any reply, the counsel for the accused shall be admitted to answer it. The debate ended in referring the subject to a Committee; who have since pronounced against the omission of the clause.

In the course of the debate, a great deal of breath appeared to be thrown away, in demanding that the accused should have the last word. The thing to be demanded, and which justice evidently points at, is that no party should have two speeches to another's one; or more correctly still, that the number of speeches should be equal. It may be possible that the best of all would be, that each party should make no speeches at all; which still comes within my rule. But if the best cannot be had, the next best is, that if the prosecutor makes a speech, the accused should be permitted to answer it; and so on *toties quoties*. As to the terror so forcibly expressed in some quarters, that there may haply sometimes be four speeches, it appears to come within the scope of the poet's line,—

“And wretches hang that jurymen may dine.”

It is better that a judge should hear four speeches, than an innocent man be irrecoverably hanged.

Some of the lawyers,—“Woe unto them,”—gave us strange advice. According to them, the way for prisoners to be in good condition, was to be put into a bad one. An alteration of the law would prevent our being objects of sympathy to judge and jury; and so we should be hanged for want of their conviction that the odds for hanging were against us. Counsel would make such replies, as would leave the judge and jury in a state of exasperation against the prisoner; as if this was a bit more likely, than that the counsel should plead for the execution of his client. What counsel would get salt to his pottage, that ever fell into one mistake or into the other? As one of the classes who are not to drive the harrow of the law but to be harrowed, I beg to protest against these niceties whenever my own turn may come.

On Thursday it was my fortune to have two Petitions from

Radical Associations (save the mark), for inquiry into the case of a private soldier; and when the moment appeared to be approaching for presenting them, it was announced by the Speaker that the time for receiving Petitions public and private, had by a new order been limited to half an hour *per diem*; which is exactly a quarter of an hour for each kind.

Think of the boasted right of petitioning the House of Commons having come to this,—that the Petitions of this great country, public and private, may be crammed into a bag under the table to as great an extent as can be accomplished in a quarter of an hour for each kind.

I returned my Petitions to the places from whence they came; with letters intimating that I could not be accessory to the farce of pretending to present Petitions under such circumstances.

When a basket is placed outside the door of the House of Commons for the reception of Petitions, I will put into it any which the Petitioners shall signify in writing they desire to be so presented. But I must decline any concern with the intermediate kind of process at present proposed.

Any man that reads the newspaper reports of the proceedings of the House of Commons, must have observed that the presentation and speaking on Petitions is in reality, so far as the people are concerned, one of the most important parts of the business of the House. It is in Petitions and the discussions consequent upon them, that a constant fire of agitation is kept up, on subjects which are finally introduced in a more imposing form. It is here, in fact, that a nation's pulse is felt, and a government forced to keep within those bounds which give it a title to the name of free. Compare the value of the time spent in this way, with the value of what is spent in making baddish Acts of Parliament. That the process may be disagreeable to some, is not to be disputed; but for that very reason the community ought to insist upon the right. The effect of the course now taken, is to prevent one set of men from speaking five minutes each on subjects very useful to the people, in order that another set may speak two hours each for no use at all.

If public opinion should declare itself upon the question (and not else), I should be glad to be the instrument of putting a notice of motion on the books, that on every day of sitting of the House, two hours be given to the reception of Petitions, if so many there be. Judge for yourself, whether this is a reasonable portion out of the eight or nine hours the House sits daily, or not.

The moment any debate was attempted upon the subject, it was stopped on the point of form, of there being no question before the House. There being thus no legitimate issue for discussion within doors, it naturally breaks forth for the consideration of our masters outside.

On the same night, I went with ministers, on the question of paying a further instalment of the Greek loan. I hate Prince Othos; but I voted against the Russian Ambassador. Let us hope the Greeks will finally get rid of German kinglings; but in the mean time they may as well have the remaining ten per cent of a regime that seems to keep them tolerably quiet for the present. I will any time go against ministers for a great reason; but not for a little one. If an agreement had been made to oppose them on the first suitable opportunity unless they conceded the liberty of the press, five-and-twenty men might have delivered Israel.

On Friday, the County Election Polls Bill, which reduces county elections to one day, was read a third time by 93 to 54, and passed.

At nearly two o'clock the Member for Wigan (Mr. Potter) attempted to make a stand for the small proprietors of land, by moving the insertion of "a majority in number and value" instead of "two-thirds in value," in the Common Fields Inclosure Bill, on the further consideration of the Report. He knew the fate of everything brought forward at that time of night, and endeavoured to put it off; but the other side knew their hour. I tried to urge the propriety of assimilating the law to that of bankruptcy; to wit, that a certain proportion both in number and value, should be required to constitute a legal act, and that proprietors of less than twenty shillings annual value (corresponding to creditors under 20*l.*) should be struck off. But land will have a law of its own, in a House constituted like ours. Nobody else supported him. When the question was put, Mr. Potter said, "The Ayes have it;" but he being an old man and not very nimble of speech, the Speaker said he was not soon enough, and refused to let us divide. And so we were not allowed to record our names. It is sickening to see the interests of the many and the poor, thus made away with. Remember that every man that thus "burked" the poor proprietors, had sworn that he was a proprietor of land to the amount of 300*l.* a-year. Truly if the people knew all about our doings, they would be tempted to sweep us away with the besom of something sharper than Reform.

London, 3 August, 1836.

On Monday, I voted differently from a number of those who are wont to be my fellows, by supporting Mr. Walter's motion for an inquiry into the working of the Poor-Law Amendment Act. At the election I was asked a pointed question on the subject of this Act; and I declared, that though the limitation of the relief to the poor might be a very good deed if accompanied by the removal of the Corn Laws, I thought it a very bad one if it was to come by itself, and that my hope was, that those who had done so would have let themselves into a good thing, and would find themselves under an increased necessity of removing the Corn Laws afterwards. And I still stick to the expectation, that the first time the feelings of the poor become excited by one of those fluctuations in the wrong direction which must some time or other happen, they will discover the grotesque injustice that has been done them, by taking away the claim they had on the rich for support, and leaving them tied and bound from maintaining themselves by the produce of their own industry. The world is growing in knowledge daily; the man can read *a, b, ab*, who did not know *a* from *b* a few months ago; and to this it must come in the end. Under these impressions I think you will be of opinion that I could not vote otherwise than I did.

In the Lords' alterations in the Tithes Commutation Bill, the Lords have re-introduced the Oath in lieu of a Declaration. It is astonishing how hard these men work, to put themselves in opposition with the growing improvements of their times.

On Tuesday the Lords' alterations in the Church of Ireland Bill were rejected by 260 to 231. Lord John Russell somewhat embarrassed his cause, by hanging his opposition to the alterations, upon a doubt whether they were not an infringement of the privileges of the Commons, in addition to their intrinsic demerits. And Sir Robert Peel, on the other side, failed, as it appeared to me, in making the most of the advantage given him. He brought his reply to no climax; or to none but what passed without discovery.

I certainly never imagined, that the phrases of a Bill being tossed over the table by the Speaker, and kicked out of the House by the Members on both sides, were anything but figurative. But if I did not misunderstand Lord John Russell's speech, he alluded to these circumstances as having literally happened, in a contest between the two Houses on a question of privilege, not longer ago than the middle of the last century. I regret that the lateness of the Morning Papers after an extended debate, prevents me from having recourse to their reports for confirmation.

London, 6 August, 1836.

ON Wednesday the President of the Board of Trade laid before the House the Resolutions of the Committee on Railways; a copy of which is forwarded to you herewith. Something seems to have been done towards securing the public, from the danger arising from allowing railways to be carried across vulgar roads "on the level;" that is to say, without the proprietors of the railway building either an arch or a tunnel, to take such roads clear. It would perhaps have been better if the practice had been prohibited altogether; but to prohibit it without special permission from the Committee on the Bill, is undeniably a considerable security. From this security, however, I believe your railway is exempt, as having passed before the insertion of the rule. The general fact, as I could collect it from inquiry upon the Hull and Selby committee, is that the cost of carrying a road overhead by an arch, is on the average less than the cost of maintaining the inspectors and machinery required by crossing on the level. For example, if carrying the road over the railway by an arch costs from five to six hundred pounds (which an engineer said would be the average expense), this is equivalent to from 20*l.* to 24*l.* a-year. But 24*l.* a-year is something less than sixteen-pence a day; and what kind of an inspector are the railway proprietors to get for sixteen-pence a day, to say nothing of the expense of keeping up the gates and other machinery required for crossing on the level? The newspapers have reported two or three "appalling accidents" already, from railways crossing carriage or foot ways. Our friends at Hull and Selby therefore would do well to consider of the propriety of carrying all their cross-roads overhead, though not forced to it by Act of Parliament. I was told they had *five* roads that were to cross on the level, and I think fifteen that were not. If they do not, I can only hope that neither you nor I shall be the man on whom the tower in Siloam falls; and if any of our neighbours have a whole coach-full of children coming home for the holidays, crushed like a nest of young caterpillars by the gardener's wheelbarrow,—or an old man and his wife returning from market on the same horse, are sent to the Infirmary leaving all their eight legs scattered upon the road,—we must stand acquitted for having demonstrated, that it would have been cheaper as well as better to have done the other way.

On the same day the Jewish Civil Disabilities bill was read a second time by 39 to 22. It seems hardly politic to have brought on the Second Reading in so thin a House; for numerous Members were absent, on the understanding that

there was to be no House at all. Another opportunity will probably be given the Dissenters for showing they know (if they *do* know), that the way for a man to secure himself, is to secure some other man that lies further outside.

On Thursday my colleague and myself were in a very small minority, on the Gold and Silver Plate bill for Scotland. It may be proper that there should be a mark to distinguish plate of a certain degree of fineness; but where is the necessity for preventing people from buying plate without that mark if they like it? One of the earliest things I recollect, was boys at the "Grammar School" looking at one another's buckles to see if they had the silver mark; and if a buckle had been found without the mark, the owner would have gone without the glory of wearing silver buckles, but that would have been
ll.

On Friday Mr. Barlow Hoy brought on his motion for an Address to the King on the subject of the American invasion of Texas; and was coldly listened to by a thin House. Have any of your readers seen an elephant ridden by "the Indian that ruled the beast," and admired the knock upon the skull with an engine like a short boat-hook, which was applied to convey the slightest intimation to the sensorium of the unwieldy patient? Just such a resounding blow does the British public seem to require, to be made to understand that the degenerate descendants of our forefathers in America, are invading Mexico for the purpose of establishing slavery. The laws of the Mexican republic, as of others of the new States formed out of the late Spanish colonies, prohibit slavery. Numbers of Americans from the slave-breeding states, have introduced themselves into the nearest province of Mexico, which is Texas, and occupied lands there; to which the Mexican government appears to have made no forcible objection, as long as they obeyed the laws. But as soon as they are settled in the country, these Americans announce, that Americans cannot live unless allowed to bring slavery along with them, and therefore they will stand up for it as one of the "rights of man." And as the powers that protect slavery would have it, they have beaten a detachment of the Mexican army sent against them, and captured the President of the Mexican republic who unfortunately was with it. Meanwhile the American government looks on, and if the slave-drivers from the Southern States, though hitherto unacknowledged, can retain Texas, there is no doubt that the government is standing by, to admit Texas into the constellation of Slave States with the least possible delay.

The answer of the ministry was poor. It turned off the

question to the slave trade by sea ; the matter at issue being, whether America was to invade Mexico for the purpose of establishing a slave trade by land. It held out hopes that America would not, and could not, think of anything so wicked as laying hands upon Texas ; to which the fitting reply would be, that they who would believe in the good intentions of America herein, would believe in General Cordova in Spain. It promised great things to be done by and by, towards repressing the slave trade in all quarters of the globe, particularly the Portuguese ; and in the mean time the Americans are to lay hold of Texas for the purpose of establishing the cart-whip, and we are to try our hands at remonstrance afterwards. It blinked the fact that the insurrection is no Mexican insurrection, but the act of foreigners ; that in the army styled insurgent there is only one Mexican, and that the despatches of this army are all written in choice American. What an outcry would be raised if a similar operation were carried on with a contrary intent ; if the Haytians for example were thrusting an armed *propagande* into some neighbouring slave country ! How soon would it be discovered, that public law was infringed, and that by a tacit consent of all nations, all had a right to interfere for the repression of such practices ! But on the present occasion, all seem to be asleep ; and we sit waiting for the consummation of the mischief, that we may know better what we have to cure.

Mr. Maclean brought on his motion or motions, for inquiring into the co-operation afforded to the Queen of Spain. The Spanish government has carried its disinclination to put down the Carlists for fear of encouraging the Liberals, a little too far ; and to the extent that the English ministry may be implicated in the same policy, it is involved in the same danger. " He that will not when he may," is a proverb peculiarly applicable in war ; the great goddess Bellona, as Mr. Windham once said, is of all goddesses the least to be flirted with. At the beginning of the year there was every prospect that the Carlists might be put down by ordinary military exertions on the part of the Spanish commander-in-chief. But wherever human reason pointed out that he should fight, there by some inspiration he invariably withdrew ; and it was generally so contrived, as that his English allies should be left to rich chances of being overpowered by the enemy. When the English force gained an advantage by itself, this was the signal for the Spanish commander to quit his army, with orders to wait till he came back. Things of this kind sometimes work their own cure. The Constitution of 1812, which is the real Constitution of Spanish growth and was only to be put down by a hundred thousand

French bayonets in 1823, is what both the Spanish and English governments will some morning find they have been nursing. After the miserable failure of the attempts to maintain anything else, it is to all appearance the only refuge left, and what our English government should be only too glad to see.

London, 10 August, 1836.

ON Monday on bringing up the Report of the Pensions Duties bill, a discussion took place on the subject of giving an additional 1300*l.* a-year to the descendant of the Duke of Marlborough by relieving him from taxes. A member of the government, Mr. F. Baring, contended that the Acts contemporary with the conferring of the pension made no provision of this nature. The ministry left the case to the House, but voted for the measure ; and the increase of the public payments was consequently voted by 37 to 35.

Events of this kind generally take place upon Clauses brought up at a late stage of a Bill, particularly on bringing up the Report. There is evidently wanting an arrangement, for subjecting all after introductions, to a process of consideration and delay substantially equivalent to what takes place with the original contents of a Bill. In what used to be the University phrase, they ought not to be "huddled."

On Tuesday the principal alterations of the Lords in the Municipal Corporations Act Amendment bill, on the suggestion of Lord John Russell, were disagreed to without a division. On the same day Lord John Russell moved the going into Committee on the Benefices Plurality bill. As I said before, this is one of the bills that is to do a little, and a very little, in the way of reforming the Church ; but because it is a little, I felt bound to vote for that little, and so went in the majority of 66 to 28, in favour of ministers.

On moving the Third Reading of the Civil Offices Declaration bill, the member for Leeds made what appeared to me to be an effort to eject the Jews from the benefit of the bill ; which as it stood, without naming them, was so worded as to include them. The Tories at all events took advantage of it, to get rid of the Third Reading for that night. If any of the Dissenters dream of being exclusive, means may be found to exclude *them* at a pinch.

It was circulated in the House of Commons last night, and I heard it from the mouth of a member of the government to

whom I was jocularly referred as one curious in such matters, that the Lisbon steamer has brought news of the Constitution of 1812 being proclaimed at Cadiz. The ministers do not seem to have been in a hurry to disperse the news outside; for their organ this morning says nothing about it. I hope the country will like it better than they. There has been nothing of equal importance since the events of July 1830 in France; and I should be glad to see the public everywhere taking it up in the same sort of way. The Constitution of 1812 is the constitution of Spanish invention, which the Spaniards have as much right to as we have to ours; and in 1823 its strength and adaptation to the country were proved, by the fact that a hundred thousand French bayonets under the Duc d'Angoulême, now happily (as the ring say) "no where," were required to put it down. Louis Philippe will probably feel desirous to intervene; but will be held in check by the fear that the French army should march upon Paris instead of Madrid, as it is now known it was within an ace of doing before. The Whig ministers will probably be determined by the course popular feeling in England takes; and if this could prevent the Tories from attacking the French revolution of 1830, it ought to have little difficulty in deciding the support of the Spanish one now. The only defect alleged against the Spanish Constitution, for which we were glad to fight when the question was of ejecting Napoleon from Spain, is that it is wanting on the item of a House of Lords. Are the people of England so much in love with their own House of Lords, as to stand upon this point? Ought they not rather to recollect what they got by the fillip given to the spirit of Reform by the Three Days in France, and be on the look-out whether the declaration of the popular Constitution in Spain is not coming at the nick of time to help us over the difficulties that have accumulated upon us since? I am not a man that pops in and out every day like the man in a weather-house; and therefore I put myself forward on the present conjuncture to say, that a bold declaration of opinion on the part of the people of England like what they made on occasion of the Three Days, might gain for us and Europe, as much as was gained for us then.

London, 13 August, 1836.

ON Wednesday the House went into a Committee of Supply. It voted 6496*l.* in addition to the enormous sums previously expended to perfect waste on a palace which nobody will ever

inhabit; and it refused 400*l.* for a gallery for the admission of ladies, after it had been determined on by two majorities. With the exception of Lords Howick and Palmerston, all the members of the government either absented themselves or voted against. I claim for them the dislike of all the women in England; and should be glad to see the time arrive, when the weight of such dislike may be manifested at an election.

On Thursday we had the entertainment of one, nay two, Free Conferences with the Lords; things interesting, like the flowering Aloes from time to time advertised in the newspapers, principally as having appeared only once in a hundred years. The last Free Conference is understood to have been in 1740; and so free it was, that either the Lords or Commons drew their swords upon the other, whereupon an order ensued, that at any future conference the Sir Charles Grandisons of the day should leave their toasting-irons in another room. The first of our two conferences was considered a dull affair; as nothing took place but an interchange of reading lessons. But the second was enlivened by positive speeches, delivered *sotto voce* with great judgment and discretion by the various champions on both sides in turn, till the list was nearly exhausted. If "lords are lordliest in their wine," it is well they come to a conference before they have well drunk; for as it is, their ideas of good manners are, that they are to plant themselves on a seat with their hats on, while the "rude and rascal commons," as the Church of England kindly expresses it in her Homilies*, are to stand before them bare-headed till they sink to the ground with fatigue. For my own part, happening to have had more exercise than ordinary in the course of the day, I sat down on the floor from pure weariness, as did several other members; and close beside me sat a Master in Chancery in his gown, who to diminish the burlesque had taken off his wig, and held it in his hand. I have been present at many conferences with semi-barbarous chieftains; but never saw their visitors greeted with a reception so hoggish. The Tory newspapers are scandalized because some of the Commons were so uncivil as to put on their hats; but they forget to state, that there was before them a line of men, no way visibly not of the same flesh and blood with themselves, carefully ensconced in hats of the dimensions of a lord-mayor's footman's, and seated with an easy dignity like that of King Arthur in "Tom Thumb," which they certainly would not have assumed if they had found themselves in their own housekeeper's-room. But this is the aristocratical part of

* Homily on Rebellion; Part 4, § 3. Oxford edition of 1822

our constitution ; and the King can raise any man to the dignity of doing unhandsomely before his fellows. On a former occasion, as I informed you, the Lords lapsed into decorum. But a council has been held upon the matter, and they have determined to re-lapse since.

On Friday on going into Committee on the Jewish Disabilities bill, the Speaker's leaving the chair was opposed ; and some of the orators declared their certainty, that every reflecting individual in the country was on their side. On a division, the strength of this party was found to be 3 against 42. It is not very comprehensible, how the representatives of such a mass of intelligent opinion, came to present so exact an analogy in point of number, to the celebrated "three tailors of Tooley-Street." But man grasps readily at comfort here below ; and if I did not entirely and involuntarily mistake, one of the determined band consoled himself with a resemblance of some kind he discovered to the Trinity. This would have been profane if it had come from our side. But the orthodox have a liberty.

London, 17 August, 1836.

On Saturday the House of Commons met and sat for two hours. Mr. Warburton gave notice of his intention to repeat the opposition to the Duke of Marlborough's clause in the Pensions Duties Bill, which had been carried on a former occasion by 37 to 35.

On Monday the tables were turned on the Duke of Marlborough's pension ; for on the motion of Mr. Warburton on the Third Reading, the clause for increasing the pension by the amount of the taxes was thrown out by 36 against 34 ; which is final, as far at least as respects the present Bill.

On the same evening, the Jewish Disabilities Bill was passed by a majority of 44 to 13. The same speakers as before, tried their strength on this occasion. I cannot approve of the system of not answering ; though something may perhaps be said for it, in the concluding stages of a Bill on which it is difficult to say anything new. The one thing which Members of Parliament cannot trust each other for, is to be brief. It is like the letting out of water ; and they are checked by the apprehension, of the "weak, washy, everlasting stream" that might ensue. The best way of obviating the difficulty, would perhaps be that brief answer should be made by some official personage. The Chancellor of the Exchequer for example, who appears to have credit with the Tories for the present Bill, should have answered in a dozen words, that his object was to christianize and not unchristianize the legislature, and that persecuting Christianity

was not the Christianity of the House of Commons. Without something of this kind, the silent system will at some time be turned to mischief in the hands of an able adversary.

On Tuesday Mr. Grove Price brought forward his motion on the state of Spain; founded on a request for papers. Discussions of this kind always serve the popular cause, and therefore it is to be hoped they will be persevered in. The Hon. mover put forward a very remarkable defence for the Durango decree, in publishing which, he said, (I love unexceptionable authorities, and therefore, as I have lately had occasion to do before, I quote from the report of the *Morning Herald*), "Don Carlos had simply acted upon a law which existed in the Basque provinces, and which had always been carried into effect during the war of independence with France." In other words, the Basques always murdered their French prisoners, and under the same rule Don Carlos murders the English. Now by the right that every man has to turn the admissions of political opponents to the advantage of his own side, I ask what the just inference from all this is, but that the civilized portions of mankind are bound to run in upon Don Carlos and his Basques together,—to *courir sus*, as the French express it,—and abate the nuisance of both prince and people if they can. Dr. Bowring, who knows more about the state of Spain than all the rest of the House of Commons put together, made an admirable reply, which if he takes a hint from an old fellow-worker, is already on the wings of paper and print to join his last at Cadiz. One point he put forward, which can never be too much spread abroad,—and that is, that the popular Constitution of Spain, with its kind of universal suffrage, its brief parliaments, and its no second chamber, instead of being "innovation," "abstract theory," and so forth, is neither more nor less than the early Constitution of the country, to which Spaniards have the same right to be attached, that we have to Magna Charta, or anything else pertaining to our ancestors we may chuse to set our hearts upon. In fact their original parliaments were annual, and the present biennial ones are only a submission to modern prejudices. Meanwhile the Constitution of 1812 seems to be advancing in all directions. The French army, if we may trust our oft-tried friend the *Herald*, has taken the alarm. Before the declaration of the Constitution, there is every reason to believe that the French military were eagerly volunteering for the French legion in the Spanish service; into which their government, with a military and political tact above the reach of ours, was encouraging them to enter. But the last news from Paris appears to be, that of the regiments invited, *not a man would*

stir. They view the attempted increase of the French legion to 25,000 men, as a mere snare to entrap them into acting against the Spanish Constitution. This bodes well; the hope of the world is, according to the noblest fable yet produced by man, in finding "the extinguishers themselves on fire."

London, 20 August, 1836.

ON Wednesday the House considered the Lords' Amendments to the Common Fields Inclosure Bill. It so happens, that the Lords have inserted the very principle, which Mr. Potter and myself attempted to stand up for, though with as much chance as he that, to speak poetically, "whistles 'gainst thunder." They have assimilated the majority that is to determine in cases of Inclosure, to what the law has already established in the case of creditors;—namely, three-fourths in *number and value*. I hope we shall get over it. And in the mean time we should probably have no objection to such coincidences being multiplied.

The House at rising adjourned to Friday.

On Friday the Prisoners' Counsel Bill came back from the Lords, with the Clause which permits the prisoner in cases of felony to be defended once, *allowed*, but the Clause which permitted that if a second speech was made for the prosecution a second should be made for the defence, *struck out*. Common sense and justice, in this case, are too much for the Lords to assent to, except by halves. We must gain from our enemies what we can; and when we are stronger we shall gain faster. Lord John Russell, however, gave a most extraordinary reason for accepting the Bill in its present state. He said, if I understood him rightly, that by the Bill as it left the Commons, prisoners for felony would have been put in a better condition than for high treason,—and it had been decided at the Revolution, that prisoners for high treason should be in the best. His Lordship must have been exhausted with making good arguments, when he hit on this.

The same day, the County Polls Bill was returned to us from the Lords, with the oyster completely taken out and the shells left. The only thing of any note the Bill pretended to do, was to limit the poll at county elections to a single day; and this they have taken out. It is the pleasure of our lords the Lords, that we of the Commons do run the gauntlet of all the corruption and violence that can be got up by a two days' poll. A few years ago the Commons were the mere lacqueys of the Lords, sent to do their business in another place, as domestics congregate in a Servants'

Hall. And the Lords seem not disposed to quit their hold on whatever of this influence may be left. It may be a question, whether they have not committed themselves to a serious interference with the right of the Commons to understand their own business. At all events it is a good reason among others, for cheering on our friends to carry reform into the Lords.

On Saturday, I heard the King's Speech; and through the accident of being asked to go previously to the House of Lords with the bringer of a Bill, had a full prospect of the ladies. The "blow," as the Horticultural Society might say, exceeded anything before. On this subject, the Lords are certainly in advance. The point of most importance in the King's Speech I noted, was that there had manifestly been no alteration made in the paragraph on Spain, in consequence of the declaration of the Constitution. Our relations, therefore, with that country, remain *in statu quo*. The last paragraph of the Speech, appears to have been taken from some old one of the Luddite times. We have heard of clergymen preaching a yearly set of sermons round; and it looks as if King's speeches came up again after an interval, in something of the same manuer.

Meantime our Constitution of 1812 goes on well. I was told to-day there is to be another Meeting on the subject; so here you have got *the second line*. The third, the "bulwark of war" as Homer calls them, are still behind; but will be forthcoming when the time comes. One of the ministers said to me last night, "You were a prophet;" and I do not think any of them are either sick or sorry for what has happened. I see our Monday's meeting stirred up your domestic Tories; as it was meant to do. There is nothing like keeping those friends of ours in action; all their movements do us good. How much will they take, for instance, by their efforts to saddle *me* with the operations of men, which they know full well were no part of the sense of the Meeting, but attacks on the sense of the Meeting? Such success to them always. Have they found out yet, who brought the opposition to the Factory Act Amendment Bill within two? Or has anybody told them, that the joke about "the beginning of the end," which they turned over week after week, and said what a shame a man should represent Hull who talked about "the beginning of the end,"—*was not mine but Talleyrand's?*

And now I bid you farewell, till fresh opportunity shall arise for aiming at the common good; in seizing which, I shall not wait for ceremony, but write to you whenever I think I see a point, on which our communication may be useful.

[The following letter, written a few days after the election, is introduced as containing the ground-work of some parts of the letters which follow.]

To the Editor of the "Hull Rockingham."

London, 26 June, 1835.

SIR,—I take the opportunity of thanking you, or perhaps more properly your Reporter, for the great accuracy of the reports given in your paper, of the various addresses made by me in different parts of the town, on occasion of the late election. I had no idea that the faculty of reporting a spoken address *verbatim*, could be carried to the extent which has been demonstrated by the reporters of all the Liberal newspapers in my native town.

A few verbal inaccuracies I will point out, as what may be useful to any who may honour the record of my proceedings with a second reading. Towards the beginning of my address from the hustings, "tyrant," "mal-governor," should have been in the plural. In the address from the balcony at the Cross-Keys, the night on which the first day's poll was collected, "aristocratic rich" should have been "aristocratic Whig." In the second line from the bottom of column 4, page 4, there is a superfluous "not." What was meant to be said, was, that "*because* I believed that the evils which pressed on the poor and middle classes, proceeded from bad and mischievous legislation (meaning the Corn Laws), *therefore* I rejoiced at the exceeding great blunder,*" &c.

Only one of the points I was anxious to impress, appears from the crowd of subjects to have been omitted. I think I recollect speaking on it at two different places, one of which I surmise to have been at Mr. Acey's on the Tuesday; and the point was this. I was anxious to show how easily the objections to the principle of Universal Suffrage on the score of numbers, might be removed by what I remember calling "suffrage by sample." In civilized countries, the time of every person's birth is known. If, therefore, it was determined that every person between twenty-one years of age and twenty-two, thirty-one and thirty-two, forty-one and forty-two, and so on, should vote,—it is manifest that a perfect abstract would be thereby made of the opinion of the whole community, and that by extending or contracting the common period (which has here been taken at a year) the number of the actual voters might be brought to bear any proportion to the actual population which might be deemed

* Which had been committed in cutting down the people's claim upon the Poor Laws, and leaving the Corn Laws in full operation;—which I had a lively hope the people never would endure.

desirable, and without the smallest additional difficulty from votes being given to women as I suggested. You will perhaps be of opinion, that it might not be without its use to give publicity to this part of my addresses, at a time when it is of so much importance to Reformers to demonstrate that they really propose nothing that is not intrinsically reducible to practice.

On the question of *Reciprocity*, I think I have gotten light, through the examination of what you have had the goodness to print in your paper. If a Hull merchant can import French wine with advantage, which shall be paid for (for example) with English wool, he is told that he ought not to be allowed to do this, unless the French will consent to admit English iron, to be paid for (for example) with French oil; and this because there would not be *reciprocity*. Now the fallacy conveyed in this statement, and which I doubt not deludes the authors of the statement as well as others, is in the idea that unless the French admit the English iron, there is something like a non-payment for the English wool exported; or that, some way or other, there is some loss or damage upon the bargain concluded between English wool and French wine. Upon which I note, that the bargain for exchanging English wool against French wine, is concluded simply because it is by itself an advantageous bargain to the parties concerned; and that the fact of its being advantageous is not in the slightest degree affected by the exchange of English iron for French oil taking place to a greater extent, or to a less, or to no extent at all. The fact of the first exchange being advantageous, is not in the smallest degree dependent on the existence of the second; and the fallacy of the demand for what is called reciprocity, is founded on representing that it is; on representing, in short, or insinuating, or leaving to be understood, that the payment for the wool is in some way dependent on the reception of the iron. I certainly never saw this in so clear a light till this day; and perhaps you will not object to give publicity to the observation.



To the Secretary of the Hull Reform Association.

London, 15 Oct. 1836.

SIR,—An occasion seems to present itself for fulfilling the engagement which concluded my letter to you of the 20th August.

Since I have had the advantage of discussing such subjects with my townsmen, I have lost no opportunity of endeavouring

to impress on them the fallacy of the demand for what our adversaries are pleased to call "commercial reciprocity," and the deep interest the members of a trading community have in its exposure.

It is astonishing how long men will live upon a word; and *starve* too. I wonder how many people are starving at this moment, in pure reverence for that big word "reciprocity." Could you expect anybody to go without "reciprocity?" Is it not quite fitting and proper, that you should starve for the sake of "reciprocity"?

The answer to this is, that when representation is made of the necessity of "reciprocity," the simple point in debate is, whether it is true. If the necessity be real, then starve for it with what patience you may. If it be not real, then starve for it as little longer as you can help.

I may go over old ground; and particularly the contents of a letter* which appeared in the *Rockingham* under the date of 26 June, 1835. But without minding this, I shall go on. A new version often makes a subject clearer; it is a fresh step upon the ladder, and should be something nearer to the mark.

You at Hull can carry on a certain trade with France. You may not have as much as you would like, because there are dunces in the way that hinder it; but you can have some. There is something, as for instance wine, which the French will allow you to bring away. And there is either something else, as for instance wool, which the French will allow to enter France in return, and so the payment is made in the end by setting off the bills for the wool against the bills for the wine, as I need not tell a Hull man how, and which is tantamount to paying for the wine with the wool;—or else payment is made in money, say sovereigns, which is only making payment with something that has been bought in Peru instead of wool, and which must have been bought in Peru, if not with wool, with something else of English produce, say hardware, which is just the same thing to English trade in the end.

But you would like to do a good deal more. You would like to buy French oil, and pay for it in iron. You would give the Frenchman a capital price for his oil, if he would take it in iron; that is to say, you could afford to give him as much iron, as when sold by the Frenchman in his own country, would give him a splendid profit and you too. But here steps in the folly of the Frenchmen;—nothing peculiar to them, for we have just as great wiseacres at home. The French government,

* The preceding Letter.

through the influence of some jobbers or other, will not allow your iron to be landed, or not without a duty that cuts up your prospects of a bargain.

Now then come our wise men at home and say to you, "Never consent to bring to Hull the wine you may buy with wool, unless the French will give up their objection to let you buy oil with iron. Let it never be said a Hull man did a thing so ruinous. Do not you see, it would not be 'reciprocity'?"

Is there a man among you, that does not see where the weakness of this trumpety piece of counsel lies? It lies in trying to have it understood, that the bargain between wine and wool is in some way or other imperfect or attended with bad consequences, unless there is also a bargain between oil and iron;—that it is not a good bargain by itself, and that you ought to kick at it unless you can have the other. There is something like an intimation, not in letter but in spirit, that there is not full compensation made by the Frenchman for being indulged with taking off our wool, unless he will also take our iron.

Now ask yourselves, is there or is there not a full and perfect payment made for the wool, when you receive the wine? Do you accept the wine, for any reason in the world, but because the bargain between wool and wine is a good one and advantageous to all parties? If so, will you allow the trade you have, to be stopped for the sake of the trade you have not? Is it reasonable that anybody should ask you? Perhaps the producers of British iron may have no objection to holding out the threat of stopping your trade in French wine, as a method of trying to frighten France into permitting a trade in their iron. But I surmise these are not the principal movers. The great agents, I suspect, are people who want, not to have something sent abroad, but to prevent something coming here;—who want to keep out some kind of foreign goods, in order to increase the price of something they desire to sell at home, and lay the difference of price once upon traders of some kind from whom they take custom to the same amount, and once over again on the consumers who are you and everybody.

But this, some people will say, is *theory*;—by which they mean in reality the application of sense and reason to a distant object, as in the case of a man who keeps a log to go to Memel. Now, if nobody had ever got to Memel, there might be some doubt. But I can show you the practical men, who have been to Memel and come back again. Read the Member for Kilmarnock's Report on the Commerce and Manufactures of Switzerland. The honest republicans have never been fools

enough to stop the introduction of any foreign goods into Switzerland, because the monarchical simpletons their neighbours were silly enough to prohibit Swiss produce. They took what they could get, and entirely refused to stop it for the sake of what they could not. And the consequence is, that the wealth and production of Switzerland have gone on increasing, at a rate to which no parallel can be produced among the neighbouring States. And this too among a people, where the government is extensively democratical; so that there is no pretence for saying it has not been done with the fullest consent of all concerned. No wonder our Tories make a set against the Member for Kilmarnock; they had rather he was drawing 10,000*l.* a-year, as coxer to some absolute government.

Another subject. In the *Morning Herald* of the 20th September, are some statements connected with the marking of newspapers under the Newspapers Postage Act, involving the conduct both of individuals pointed out and of the Liberal members generally, on which the editor has been invited to insert a counter-statement with the name of the author; and as he has declined complying in any shape with the custom of the press in like cases, I have a right to assume that there is a political object in keeping up the misrepresentation, and that there is consequently a political object in exposing it. It is intimated in the paper mentioned (last column of 2nd page), that the Members who assume the title of Liberals were too busy in attending to some concerns of their own, to mind those of the people on this occasion; and the Member for Kilmarnock is particularly pointed at, as not "having thought it worth while to secure to the public even the small privilege of marking a paragraph in a newspaper sent by post."

If the writer of the article had possessed as good opportunities of knowledge as I had, he would have known that the Member for Kilmarnock made a most pointed representation on the subject to the House, and specified an instance where a London newspaper addressed to him during one of his election contests, was charged fifteen shillings in consequence of a paragraph in it being marked. And to prove that I do not speak without what the French call *connaissance de cause*, I was the man that marked and sent him the newspaper, containing a paragraph favourable to his election, and which he would very probably have been glad to see at the expense of fifteen shillings if he had known of it. Whether this was the handy-work of some retainer of the Post Office of opposite political principles, is never likely to be known. But what may happen

to one political party may happen to another ; and the wise and desirable thing would be to remove the evil altogether.

If I may be allowed to class myself under the *Herald's* category, it will be nothing but the truth to state, that I urged on the Chancellor of the Exchequer with all the clearness of expression I could muster, the nullity of interest, or rather the opposite of interest, which he as a financier had in preventing the marking of paragraphs in a newspaper for the simple purpose of directing to them the attention of the reader ; and I specifically confined myself to pleading for being allowed to mark a paragraph *by a line down the side*, as being in the highest degree inapplicable to the conveyance of any ulterior communication. I told him that in my own experience, it had frequently chanced to me to order a dozen copies of a particular newspaper, for the sake of a paragraph in it which I marked and sent to the same number of individuals, chiefly newspaper editors, in the country ; and I assured him, in the most distinct manner which some degree of literary practice enabled me to compose, that in no one of these instances *would any letter have been sent*, or did any loss accrue to the revenue, while on the other hand the stamps on the papers were duly paid ; for confirmation of all which, I refer you to my letters of the 23rd and 27th July, transmitted to you at the time. The Chancellor of the Exchequer treated me and my proposition with merriment, and tried to make *hilarité dans la chambre* by holding me up as having fallen into some solecism of expression ; though if there were a necessity for the question being cut down to one of school-boy criticism, the difficulty would be found reducible to the Chancellor, as is neither unnatural nor culpable, being wanting in that acute perception of the meaning of the word "*would*," of which the natives of this side of St. George's Channel are considered as having a monopoly. In England, "*would*" implies a contingency, a conditionality,—in fact that it is followed by an *if*, expressed or understood ; and I defy any man to point out any *if* by which the words in Italics could be followed, except "*if the newspapers had been kept back*." He spoke of the *naïveté* with which I had advanced my proposition ; and on another occasion when I urged the multitude of communications highly useful to individuals, which would be the consequence of allowing paragraphs to be marked down the side, without any diminution, or rather with an increase to the revenue,—he adopted the same amusing course, of dropping all notice of the reservation, and answered that the reasons offered, were with him the strongest reasons for not complying. I am not so precise as to represent a

jocular misrepresentation of this kind as a breach of morality, nor so thin-skinned as to be offended because a minister of state cannot restrain his disposition to be merry. But I feel confident that if I had been so fortunate as to have to do with the leaders of the opposite side of the House, to a serious and friendly proposition I should have received a serious and friendly answer; and it is scarcely necessary that I should suggest in that quarter, that in the event of their chusing at any time to take up the subject, there are many Radicals who would be glad to meet them on any neutral ground that should be fixed upon, for the purpose of trying whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer could not be brought to a serious and fructifying consideration of the question. If the refusal had come from the Conservative side, we should have been ready enough to tell them, it was because they thought the balance of the press was against them. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer is of that opinion with respect to his own exclusive party, there appears no reason why others should not join to prevent his having his way.

I attempted with equal earnestness to impress upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer the gratuitous trouble and hardship he was inflicting on the newspaper press of all shades of politics, by making it penal on the publication of a Supplement, not to state the publication of the Supplement at the end of the newspaper, as well as at the beginning of the Supplement. I pointed out to him, in the best words my habits of expression could supply, that when a newspaper editor wanted to publish a Supplement, it was frequently in consequence of the arrival of a mass of new matter after his paper had either entirely or in part gone to press; that to announce at the head of the Supplement, that it was a supplement to such a day's newspaper, was essential to the financial object of preventing the Supplement from being sold without the newspaper which is what bears the principal stamp; but that to announce this at the bottom of the newspaper also, was essential to nothing except annoying the newspaper press. But my fortune in this instance was as small as in the other.

I assure you that as to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's saying it would be better to leave the matter to the discretion of the Post Office, with the rest of what is added in the *Herald*, he said, so far as I am capable of giving evidence, nothing of the kind at all. When urged to admit in the most guarded terms the drawing a line down the margin of a paragraph, he utterly refused and rejected the smallest approach to concession. What he *did* say was, that he thought *Members of*

Parliament might be allowed to receive newspapers marked ; a thing nearly useless to them unless they are also allowed to send newspapers marked into the country, to say nothing of the gratuitous privation to the rest of the community.

Under these circumstances you will agree with me, that the hardest of all hard things is that the Liberal Members, either individually or collectively, should be represented as having deserted their duty on this occasion ; and most of all, by newspapers that refuse to insert the contradiction of the representation when conveyed to them. Whether they feel any interest in leading the public into a fool's paradise upon the subject by way of keeping things as they are, is what we may not be imperatively called upon to settle ; but it is entirely within our province to determine, that as far as depends on us, the chance of it shall be cut off.

The *Quarterly Review*, I see, contains a mis-statement of a similar nature on another point. In No. CXIII, for September 1836, it intimates that no resistance was made in the House of Commons to the insertion in the Common Fields Inclosure Bill, of "two-thirds in *value*," instead of "two-thirds in *number* and *value*" as it first stood, and as was finally reinstated by the Lords. Its words are, "We believe that this exaggeration of—what in a Tory would be called—*aristocratical oppression*, passed the House of Commons without a whisper of objection ; but the Lords, with their habitual and constitutional vigilance over such matters, detected and remedied the injustice, by enacting that two-thirds in *number* as well as in *value* should concur to call the Act into operation."—p. 256, Article *The Last Session*.

This imposes on me the duty of referring you to my letter of the 30th July to show, that *two* Radical Members did all in their power to resist the offensive and unpopular introduction, which finally the Lords could not swallow ; and that their recording the resistance by dividing the House, was prevented solely by the act of the Whig Speaker, who refused to let them divide, on the ground that the mover, a man advanced in years, was not quick enough in saying "The Ayes have it." It is within the cognizance of every Member of the House, whether it is not the constant practice to put the question a second time, when suggestion is made that anybody has been taken by surprise ; and I should be glad if Members of experience would convey to us the knowledge by post or otherwise, of any existing precedent for a Division being refused upon the plea that the Speaker won the race. And now see the consequences of a party submitting to a wrong in the persons of any

of its members. The Radicals are prevented by the Speaker from recording a Division on an abuse; and then comes the House of Lords and removes the abuse, while the Tories tell our constituents that not a whisper of objection was made to it in the Commons. Not that I believe the Speaker did it with the malice prepense of the men that Solomon appears to have known, who said "Let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause." I believe that he was sleepy and ill-humoured; but he would no more have done it to the Whigs who are his own party, nor to the Tories whom they are afraid of, than a man will yawn before his mistress or his enemy. But none of this makes the mischief less; so if the Tories send down one version of the history, let us do our best to send down the other. We are ill-treated in all sorts of ways; yet I hope nothing of this kind will make us swerve an inch from the public interest. If any of our friends lose their temper, tell them there is a remedy. *Get power*; and then all that now annoys you, will run after you as if you were its grandfather.

London, 19 Oct. 1836.

I RETURN to the Member for Kilmarnock's Report on the Commerce and Manufactures of Switzerland; which ought to be in the hands of every man and boy in Hull, who pretends to more insight into the nature of trade and the sources of its prosperity, than the urchins that play at marbles in the streets. Take a little of the beginning; and at every word try to extract the bearing which it has on the concerns of your own town and traffic.

'It could not, indeed, but excite the attention of any reflecting person, that the manufactures of Switzerland—almost unobserved, and altogether unprotected, had been gradually, but triumphantly, forcing their way into all the markets of the world, however remote, or seemingly inaccessible. That such a remarkable result was not the consequence of geographical position is obvious, for Switzerland neither produces the raw material which she manufactures, nor, when manufactured, has she any port of outlet, except on the conditions which her maritime neighbours impose upon her. No one of her fabrics owes its prosperity to a protecting or interposing legislation; yet it is not the less true that, without custom-houses to exclude or laws to prohibit the full action of foreign competition on her various industries, her progress has been almost unexampled in manufacturing prosperity. I anticipated, certainly, that Switzerland would exhibit a living and instructive example of the truth and importance of the great principles of political economy when brought into practical operation; but I scarcely expected to find that they had been instrumental in producing such a vast mass of content

and happiness as I found existing in the manufacturing cantons, or that they would have raised so large a proportion of the labouring class to independence and comfort.'

'If, in the details which I have to lay before your Lordships, defects and deficiencies should be discovered, I hope it will not be forgotten that in a country whose industry is nowise interfered with by the ruling power, where no custom-houses exist, nor any system of taxation requiring official returns, facts are collected with difficulty; and the questions of consumption, of export and import, necessarily escape from anything like a precise estimate of their progress or their fluctuations. I found, indeed, without a solitary exception, every one of the Swiss governments desirous of communicating whatever information it possessed or I required; yet it constantly happened that accurate arithmetical statistics were inaccessible. But it is impossible to mistake the value of a policy whose results are to be traced in the general content—in the general prosperity. *In most of the manufacturing cantons of Switzerland the power of legislation is not only indirectly, but directly, in the hands of the whole body of the people. Were their commercial economy opposed to the common interest, it could not exist for a day.* It has the sanction of universal experience and of universal approbation. Two millions of men have made, under every disadvantage, the experiment of free trade as a system. Its incontrovertible results must, I am sure, silence the doubts and remove the difficulties of the honest and disinterested inquirer.'—*Report on the Commerce and Manufactures of Switzerland. By John Bowring. 1836. p. 3.*

'Switzerland is far away from all the great outlets of trade. The cotton she manufactures has to be conveyed many hundreds of miles from the Mediterranean, and even a greater distance from the Atlantic Ocean. Her silks she imports from Italy and France, and her wool from Germany. When her produce seeks a market in a foreign land it is exposed to the risks and delays and charges of the same tardy, difficult, and expensive transit. It must find its way over the Jura or the Alpine mountains; be conveyed down the irriguous rivers, or on the inland lakes; yet, *spite of all impediments, the manufactured products of Switzerland are found in all the great markets of the universe; and the reason is simple, but obvious,—Industry has been left to itself.* Wealth has not been diverted by legislative interference from its own natural tendencies. There has been no foolish struggle encouraged by the government between the protected monopoly of the few and the unprotected interests of the many. The consumer has been allowed to go to the cheapest market, the producer to the dearest; and the present position and prospects of Swiss industry, studied in the facts and the details of its increase, will have some influence perhaps with those to whom free-trade theories are repulsive or hateful.'

'It might be expected that the prohibitory system with which surrounding States have fenced their frontiers would alarm the manufacturers of Switzerland, and induce them to seek commercial alliances among neighbouring countries, by adopting a similar legislation, falsely called *protective*. But such has not been the tendency of Swiss opinion, nor the recommendation of Swiss experience. Many of the most

enlightened manufacturers assured me that though in 1814 they were much alarmed by the great political changes in progress, and earnestly desirous of making some arrangements with other powers grounded on a basis of mutual favour, they were now convinced that the free-trade and the free-transit policy are the wisest, the most prosperous, and the best. Notwithstanding the natural disadvantages of the geographical position of the Swiss cantons, I am persuaded there does not exist in the world a manufacturing industry more sound, healthy, and elastic, than that of Switzerland. While, on the one hand, it is an object of alarm to those who represent the interests of the *protected* portion of the manufacturers of France,—while the markets of Germany and Italy are becoming less and less accessible to the produce of Swiss industry,—that industry, on the other, is constantly making its way to new regions of demand. The consumption it formerly found in Europe is now far exceeded by that in the transatlantic states; and Switzerland has already, by a courageous perseverance in an intelligent and successful commercial policy, established her manufactures on the broad and immovable basis of *cheap production*. In travelling through the different districts I constantly found merchants and manufacturers who had established connexions with the remotest countries of the globe. They assured me that the anxieties had now ceased which they had felt for some time in consequence of the lines of custom-houses with which France and Germany and Italy, their circumjacent neighbours, had girdled their frontiers; that they were in fact independent of that narrow and selfish policy which had created the tariffs of so many European nations; that they had been pressed into a wider and more profitable field, which they could successfully explore to the extent of their capitals and their means of production.

The Diet of Switzerland, on the strong representations of the Swiss manufacturers, and by way of reprisal upon the prohibiting measures of the French Government, made an attempt in 1820 to introduce a protecting system into the legislation of the country. It really existed only for a few months, and the impediments to free communication were gradually worn out by the mere pressure of the public opinion and the instinct of the public interests. On no topic whatever did I find such a community of feeling as that which recognised the benefits which free trade had conferred upon the country. Even among those seemingly interested in prohibition and protection, there were many who confessed that a great change had taken place in their opinions. A number of manufacturers who had formerly been strenuous advocates for heavy custom-house duties on foreign articles, and had considered themselves to have an exclusive right to the national consumption of their manufactures, especially while surrounding states excluded them, were now convinced by experience that their views had been erroneous, and that their establishments had acquired a strength and a solidity which a protecting penal legislation never could have given them. One of the principal cotton manufacturers says, "In every warehouse, in every shop in the land, English and French goods are exhibited by the side of ours. They have paid no duties; ours have had no protection. Insignificant as were our early attempts, and confined as were our markets, our Government thought right to deny us a helping hand, and to force us to shift

for ourselves; and, in spite of the tremendous rivalry of British capital and French taste, we have succeeded. The history of the last century is a history of our progress. Spite of every obstacle, weak as we are,—without a single port or means of outlet except such as are held at the good pleasure of our neighbours,—our articles have found their way, and meet with a ready sale in the four quarters of the globe.”—*Id.* p. 4.

Every word of this drops wealth, for those to whom it is given to receive it. See how far, after all our boastings and all our advantages, we are behind a few republican tradesmen and cultivators, who have had the opportunity of making the law *by* themselves and *for* themselves. Calculate the difference between what they have done and we, under our relative difference of natural situation; and thence estimate, if you can, how much has been taken from us on the whole, and how much is taken from us annually at the present.

Take some more of the proceedings of the Swiss.

‘In 1830-31 no less than thirteen cantons remodified their constitutions by giving further extension to the popular power. It is true that the change brought into greater action the ignorance and prejudices as well as the knowledge and interests of the people. But the change rather strengthened than weakened the free-trade principle. The labouring classes form a large majority in the manufacturing cantons, where the democratic power is the least controlled. They might, if they pleased, *protect*, as it is called, their labour, exclude foreign competition, settle wages by legal enactments, and subvert all those axioms of political economy which are often held up to opprobrium as hostile to the happiness of the many. But they are living witnesses, living evidences of the truth and value of those fundamental principles of economical science to which they owe their well-being and constantly-increasing prosperity. It has been again and again my lot to hold intercourse with intelligent Swiss workmen, who considered their freedom from commercial trammels as the greatest and best of their privileges. The late insurrection at Lyons forced a number of silk-weavers to settle on the banks of the Lake of Zurich. They gain less wages, it is true, but they enjoy incomparably greater comforts than they left behind them; and I shall not easily forget the observation of one of them; “Sir, the floor on which I tread in Switzerland is cleaner than the table from which I ate my food in France.”—*Report &c.* p. 6.

Hear of the doings of a Swiss Committee, and compare them with what would be the probable doings of a Committee of the House of Commons.

‘In December 1833 the Swiss confederation appointed a committee to report on the foreign commercial relations of Switzerland. The members of the committee were Messrs. K. von Muralt, J. C. Zellweger, Laue, E. His, Ganguillet, and C. Miescher. Their first report was published within a fortnight after their installation, and it proclaims the

principles of a sound and liberal policy. The report naturally boasts of the honourable fact, that the various industry of Switzerland has developed itself without protection or privilege for articles produced at home, as without prohibitions or duties on those imported from abroad; and it strongly recommends, in the fiscal and custom-house struggle which is going on in Europe, that Switzerland should preserve a strict neutrality.—*Report &c.* p. 8.

‘Having thus decidedly objected to become a party to any custom-house league proposed by other nations, they inquire whether a more rigid custom-house system of their own, and the imposition of duties upon foreign produce, might not be a national benefit. They answer, No! for that, though the right of Switzerland to establish a system of her own is undoubted, yet the interests of Switzerland demand for her citizens complete freedom of trade; that to buy and sell without restriction is the best source of individual and national prosperity; that the cost of custom-house restrictions, and their accompanying inconveniences, added to the demoralisation which smuggling brings with it, are no small additional motives for objecting to the establishment of such restrictions among a free and intelligent and virtuous people.’

‘The committee contend further, that as a means of influence and reprisal, such a project would fail; that it would indispose the neighbouring powers to treat; would raise the price of Swiss goods, and diminish the demand for them when any change should take place.’—*Id.* p. 9.

‘The Committee conclude their Report with the following Resolutions:—

- “I. The Swiss confederation shall irrevocably adhere to its established system of free trade and manufacture.
- II. Under no circumstances and no conditions shall it form a part of the French custom-house system, of the Prussian Commercial League, or the custom-house line of any foreign nation.
- III. It shall use every effort for the establishment and extension of the principles of free trade.
- IV. It shall, as far as possible, discuss and establish conventions with the neighbouring states for the disposal of agricultural and vineyard produce and cattle, *for obtaining the free ingress of corn*, and for maintaining the daily, reciprocal, economical, neighbourly and border traffic and market transactions.
- V. Wherever a free trade is not obtainable, it shall endeavour to remove all prohibitions, to lower duties, and to secure the power of transit on the most favourable terms.
- VI. When exceptional favours can be obtained, they shall be used for the advancement of those measures which lead to the accomplishment of the ends proposed; so, however, that exchanges be not thereby limited, nor personal liberty interfered with.
- VII. In the interior of Switzerland it shall make every exertion to assist industry and to remove impediments to intercourse, taking care, however, that it do not interfere with the personal concerns of merchants or manufacturers.”—*Id.* p. 10.

I think it is within my knowledge, that forty years ago, merchants at Hull had a great idea of the benefit of sending their sons to Holland, to learn, I suppose, some new method of double or single entry, or some improved manner of locking up a cash-box. They had more need, now, send them to Switzerland.

An odd contrast is presented between Switzerland the most forward country in the world in commercial policy, and France the most backward. This may possibly be one reason why the king of the *épiciers* is threatening Switzerland.

'The population of Switzerland, though only consisting of two millions, offer, even for the consumption of the country, in consequence of their unrestricted freedom of trade, a considerable market to foreigners. The principal articles imported from France are wine, oil, madder, brandy, alcohol, salt, fruit, sugar, coffee and colonial produce, silk, woollen and cotton manufactures, and articles of fashion of a great variety of sorts. There is no duty, other than a nominal one, upon any one of these objects, while France receives from Switzerland some horned cattle and cheese, both of which pay enormous duties, and ribands, linens, and threads, all subject to large custom-house imposts. There is also a considerable export of watches and jewellery, which is principally in the hands of contraband traders.'

'Such a state of things naturally produces much discontent in Switzerland, and many representations have been made to the French Government on the necessity of modifying their tariff in a more liberal spirit. There can be no doubt that French agriculture would in the end be greatly benefited by a more extensive introduction of young and lean cattle from Switzerland, and by lowering the duty on horses, which are frequently purchased in Switzerland for the use of the French army. The impediments created by France have already influenced the agricultural productions of Switzerland. Corn and olive culture has invaded the meadow lands, and the oils and grains of France suffer from the loss of the Swiss markets. There is also a tendency to extend the breeding of sheep, a consequence of which will probably be the establishment of rival woollen manufactures, and the loss of those supplies of cattle and horses, which, up to the Restoration, were considered a benefit to France, whose tariff, till then, had imposed a heavy duty on their exportation, while to importation all facilities were given. Of late, the exports of cattle and other Swiss produce being in the direction of Italy and Germany, imports naturally fall into the same route. The salt which Lorraine formerly furnished is now provided by Germany; but the mere transfer of supply from one country is not alone the subject of regret, since the unfriendly and hostile tariff of France has produced among the Swiss population sentiments of repulsion which cannot be witnessed without pain, and which will leave traces behind them even should the causes from which they originated be removed.'

'In representations to the French Government the Swiss authorities have put prominently forward the notorious fact that the protection afforded to French manufactures by highly-raised or prohibitory tariffs

has not produced its intended results ; that no manufacturing industry has suffered such violent shocks or seen such terrible reverses as the *protected* industry of France. "It may require time," they say, "to enable France to relieve herself from these visibly disastrous effects of her isolated and contracted policy ; but as crisis will follow crisis, and the pressure of one prohibition upon another be more and more felt, the progress of inquiry and the necessities of the times, it may be hoped, will persuade the French nation, ere long, that they have far more to gain by an extension of liberal commercial principles than by any protecting tariffs, however dexterously or artfully combined."

"Three lines of custom-houses surround the French territories ; their main business is to exclude whatever other countries offer that is better and cheaper than the articles France herself produces. In order that a small number of manufacturers may gain, the whole consuming population are condemned to lose, and to lose in a far heavier proportion ; but so many factitious interests are involved, and so little has a sense of the general interest pervaded general opinion, that the late demands of the Swiss upon France have been less for a complete change of the tariff, than for a lowering of the duties upon some articles peculiarly interesting to Switzerland."—*Report &c.* p. 11.

How happy might nations be, if they had not governments to hinder them ! Well may the Tories give out, that the Member for Kilmarnock is "the laughing-stock of Europe." Set that by the side of "the good king" Carlos. They know their business and we know ours. If Tory abuse means anything, the Member for Kilmarnock must be a great man in his generation.

London, 22 Oct. 1836.

THOUGH in these days of steam-boats and accelerated mail-coaches, one man cannot be said to be much more in the way of information than another, you will perhaps expect me to do something in the way of putting together and comparing the conclusions which have been come to in different quarters, upon the point or points to which men's attention at this moment is manifestly attracted.

We have gone successfully and happily through the first stage of a revolution. I do not want you to believe this on my authority ; look at the assertions of our opponents, past, present, and to come, and see if they do not declare it to have been a revolution. This first stage consisted in taking the appointment of the Members of the House of Commons from the peers, and giving it to the people. The understanding in the old state of things used to be, that the Lords never went against a majority of more than, eighty I think it was, in the Commons ; and our predecessors shook their heads over this, as a proof of the power of the Commons. It was left to us their successors to find out,

that the secret of this lay in its being impossible there should be a majority of more than eighty in the Commons, without there being at the same time a majority ready in the Lords. It is easy enough to find data that would fit the case. Suppose the truth was, that there was a certain number (x as an algebraist might call it) of independent Tories in the House of Commons, and a number greater by 80 ($x + 80$) of independent Liberals,—by independent, meaning men who did not owe their seats to peers, nor in any other way were influenced by them in their votes ;—and that the rest, being a large proportion of the whole House, were the creatures of peers of all the different shades of lordly opinion. This state of things, I submit, would make it physically impossible, that any question should ever be carried by a majority of more than 80 in the fullest House, without there being previously a majority ready to vote for it in the Lords.

This state of things, happy or unhappy, has been done away by the Reform Bill. The Lords are now the Lords, and not the Lords and Commons too. The oil which the lovers of the sometime “glorious constitution” so doted on, is gone and absorbed ; and the two portions of the governmental joint grate and grind upon each other, without the harmony which arose from the one part being the mere prolongation of the other. Things cannot go on so ; *we* knew it and *they* knew it, and *we* have beaten. Either the Reform Bill must be undone, and the Lords be both Lords and Commons again ; or something must be done to bring the Reformed government into a working state.

There was no abstract necessity for things being brought to this pass ; but we have been brought to it by the will and determination of the Lords. Had the Lords possessed the far-sightedness for which aristocracies, unjustly enough perhaps, have taken credit, they might have put the wool-sack of delay between themselves and the shock of change, and taken the chances of what time might do towards recovering their old position. But most happily for us, this policy they have scouted. They have said boldly and lordfully, “Here we stand, the offspring of the by-gone time, an oak here and a mushroom there, and as long as we can each count one, you shall have no good thing either with us or without us.”

Under these circumstances, it is out of the question that they can maintain their ground. They have not, as our friends the Methodists are fond of saying, “used the means.” The proof of their inability, is in the quiet way in which the belief that something must and will be done, has wrought itself into the public mind. One of the latest-born of Tory organs*, calls the

* Metropolitan Conservative Journal, No. I, 8 Oct. 1836.

Reform of the Lords "a question it is treason to contend;" and so it would have been forty years ago. The headsman and the dissector's assistant would have been in requisition; there is no doubt of that. But see how quietly we "contend" it now. Is that no symptom, that they have been "weighed in the balances"?

The power of the peers is one which could never have been transferred from a rude and early state of society into a civilized one, unless shielded from public view either by non-exercise, which is equivalent to being no power, or by some invasion of the rights of other portions of the community, never legitimized by public consent. The Reform Bill was a public protest against consent; and the peers had not the genius to have recourse, even temporarily, to their other weapon which was non-exercise. The consequence has been, to show all the obsolescence of their deformity. They stand out in their antique oddity, a detachment of the tortoise-lizards of the primitive ages, pretending to lord it in these days of steam-cannon and rocket-harpoons.

What reason can they have to expect to stand unaltered, after the basis of their actual power, their influence in the Commons, has been stricken from under them? Can they show any fitness, that the people should take them up again, and restore them to the position from which they have just taken the trouble to shake them down? That they were the people's enemies as they were, was decided at the passing of the Reform Bill; there is nothing reasonable in asking the people to let that battle count for nothing. It is true enough, there is a party that upholds the Lords as the possessors of all wisdom, and the indispensable judges of all policy. But this was the party beaten at the Reform Bill. The Lords had been masters before, and the people had dismissed them from their palmy state. A beaten party must consent to be beaten; at all events till it can find the means of getting uppermost. The old government by the Lords, is what the people have resisted and abolished; and unless the party which was then put down can recover its superiority, the new government by the Lords will not go unaltered.

If it is settled that there will be an alteration, the next questions are what and how. And it is plain the object must be, to have the alteration that will be most safe, most effectual, and most satisfactory to that portion of the peers which is and always has been on the people's side.

The modes proposed for acting on the Lords, and the things proposed to be accomplished on them, are sundry.

One proposal is, that a great public agitation shall be got up as on occasion of the Reform Bill, and that this shall be done *toties quoties*, whenever the Lords may call for the application. This is like asking a man to be trepanned every time his head aches. He may muster resolution for the operation once in a way, to strike at the root of some overwhelming evil; but he cannot be doing it every day, and those who advise it know he will not.

Another proposal is, that the public action shall be got up once for all, and then applied to effect some change that shall be of lasting operation. And this, beyond dispute, looks more in accordance with the rules by which men act elsewhere. An offset of this sect goes farther, and maintains that the action ought to be conducted through a particular channel,—stopping the Supplies.

To the last part of the proposal, two objections appear to be advanced. One is, that the power of stopping the Supplies, on the strength of which our fathers went on their way so comfortably,—is *fumus et umbra*. That it is as if a man were found going about and saying, “I have a cure for all human evils; nothing can assail me for which I have not a remedy at hand; an heir-loom has descended to me which sets me quite above the world; *I have a knife, and can cut my throat.*” This, we are assured, is the upshot of the boasted old English remedy of stopping the Supplies. We have the power, we are told, of stopping our own breath; we are the creatures of our own supplies, and if we do not supply them we are defunct. The Supplies could not be stopped, it is gravely stated, without half-pay officers and their families being seen running about the country, in a condition that would overwhelm the public sensibilities; it would be pulling down universal ruin, for the insufficient purpose of preventing ourselves from being ruined by the Lords.

I vehemently suspect that our forefathers when they put their trust in this weapon of stopping the Supplies, knew very well that it was a weapon which they durst handle, and their opponents were afraid to dare them to employ. That evils might result from the stoppage of the Supplies, was the very reason why they knew their adversaries could not face the responsibility of prolonging such a state of things by resistance. The Supplies are stopped by their lawful guardians the representatives of the Commons; now let the Lords or whoever else may be on the other side, determine to what precise point they will make themselves responsible for the mischief of resistance, and fail after all. This seems to be the reasonable light in

which the Commons would put forward their refusal of Supplies, and in which the community who are their masters would receive it.

Suppose a private gentleman, by way of checking the disorders of his household, and maintaining the direction which as owner he has a right to, were to threaten stopping the supplies. Of what use would it be to threaten him, with the sufferings of the grooms and helpers, or the fainting-fits of the lady's maid. Suppose a professor of humanity were to try to catechise him on the subject; what answer would he get, but that the owner was only exercising his natural right, and all he wanted was due obedience to the power of the purse. Or suppose the coachman should threaten him with letting his horses loose, and turning the stable out of window to revenge the stoppage of their oats. What would the master do, but give the coachman over to the New Police, and feed his horses through another hand? You would perceive upon the instant, that all these threats were whiff and wind, got up for the mere chance of what they might stand for with a sheepish master.

Another objection which only throws light upon the weakness of the other, has been, that if the Commons were to stop the Supplies, the Lords might do it too. Now one way to hinder this, would be to take care that the first stopping was for some effectual object. Do the opponent's business effectually once, and there will be no chance left him for attacking you in turn. But setting this aside, it no more follows that because the Commons could stop the Supplies in the people's cause, the Lords could stop them against it, than that because a man can set his dog upon an enemy, the enemy can set the dog upon the master in return. It is precisely because there is a connexion of old standing on one side and not the other, that retaliation of the kind supposed is a long way beyond impossible. Try the course; and let the Lords take their chance of executing the rebutter.

Whether the resource which would once have settled the whole difficulty, a creation of peers, could at any time be applied with effect in aid, is what must be settled upon view. Apparently it might serve to decide a balanced question, or help the public round a corner. But the one clear thing is, that it must be applied to do, what should never want doing again.

If the thing is to be done, prudence would point to doing it in any of the ways and all. The popular steam must be got up, and directed into the channel of stopping the Supplies if needful. But above all things, there must be something done that shall operate for evermore. Following the example of

Nature, we must lay down rules that shall endure, and not be calling on the omnipotence of the people to interfere, every time a man who had fathers before him shall be disposed to be unreasonable.

But if such is to be the mode of doing, what is it that is to be done? Would it be advisable, as some say, to "destroy the peerage altogether," and make the best of all possible Houses of Commons? This would offend against the rule of making the least alteration that will suffice. Ought we to "circumscribe the power of the peers, and render it impossible for them to exercise their vote more than twice"? This would be nearly as difficult as the other, and would leave more mischief. Would our condition be mended by "the creation of a certain number of peers not hereditary, and mingled with those that are"? Experience in other countries has proved, that peers of this kind for the most part are successful jobbers, devoid of the best property of the existing peerage, which is that a good man may be born in it by chance. Shall we have "an aristocratic senate chosen by a wealthier class of electors than the lower house"? This would be courting evil, where we have the power to remove. The great business of good government is to keep down and moderate the tendencies of wealth;—to make the possession of it possible, by rendering it tolerable to the people. Wealth is the dangerous servant and frightful enemy, which like fire is to be kept under watch and ward; and it is no part of the business of a free government to be contriving ways for it to display its natural turn for mischief. The assertion that the rich want barriers against the poor, is disproved by all history. In all times and places, the poor have been the victims of the legislation of the rich, except exactly so far as they could muster intelligence and political influence to hinder it. Representative governments are an invention, as far as they have gone, for moderating the power of the rich; and just so far as they cut off the poorer classes from the benefit of representation, so far do they avow that these classes it is intended to maltreat. Lastly, "shall we have a House of Lords chosen from the Lords, by the same electors that choose the House of Commons"? This is the best thing yet. It has the advantage on the score of practicability, that it holds out a considerable motive to the better-minded of the Lords to accede. A Lord that could get elected by the people, would manifestly be as good as two that could not. But the idea seems to be only yet in the rough; and the time between this and its execution, will probably be enough for collecting the improvements.

The only substantial reason for having a Second Chamber where it can be avoided, is that by being independent of the *momentary* popular will, it may sometimes act as a useful check, by combining the feeling of an aggregate of years, with the feeling of the present. When any great question arises, the first step in a government with any pretensions to popularity, is to (what is called) appeal to the sentiments of the people, —in other words, dismiss the existing First Chamber and chuse a new one. Hence to make a Second Chamber of any use, the two points indicated are, that the members should sit for a period, which without taking away all responsibility, is still considerable; and that they should in no event be liable to be all disbanded together. The perception of this last desirableness, has probably had considerable effect in causing Second Chambers to be framed with seats for life.

It certainly does not appear to be beyond human art, to frame a plan by which the members of an elective assembly holding their seats for a term of years, should vacate their places with the same absence of effect on the continuity of the assembly, as if the vacancies were left to occur by deaths. And when we reflect on the multitude of muscles put into action daily by every man in putting on his clothes, it does not seem impossible that at some time the public should come to this capacity. All that seems needed is, that on the first collection of the assembly, the seats should be divided by lot into equal classes of one, two, and so on to as many years as make the perfect term; all seats afterwards, whether vacant by death or superannuation, to be elected to, for the full term. Resignations not to be receivable in any case; nor votes by proxy.

Both these requisites of a Second Chamber might be attached to Mr. O'Connell's plan,—for Mr. O'Connell's it is. Let each constituency that now elects two commoners to the Commons, elect one lord to the Lords. And let such as elect one to the Commons, be clubbed two-and-two together to elect a lord; a mode of election which exists now in some instances, without producing any harm. Concede the point of their sitting for seven years, with provisions for the first time as specified; and use it as an additional reason for demanding the shortening of the time of sitting in the Commons. All this would make a parliament, which would be as likely to go on harmoniously for the people's good, as the old one for their evil.

There can be no harm in thinking of the kind of shoe that would fit, whatever the determination of other men that we shall not obtain it. Continue as we are, we cannot; the Lords have put themselves into a state of incompatibility with conti-

nuance. Paley said it was evidence of the Divine benevolence, that no direct provision was ever discovered in the human frame for the production of suffering. "Teeth are contrived to eat, not to ache; their aching now and then, is incidental to the contrivance, perhaps inseparable from it: or even, if you will, let it be called a defect in the contrivance; but it is not the *object* of it. No anatomist ever discovered a system of organization, calculated to produce pain and disease, or, in explaining the parts of the human body, ever said, this is to irritate; this to inflame; this duct is to convey the gravel to the kidneys, this gland to secrete the humour which forms the gout: if by chance he come at a part of which he knows not the use, the worst he can say is, that it is useless: no one ever suspects that it is put there to incommode, to annoy, or to torment."

It would be difficult to say as much, for the invention of an irresponsible Chamber, sitting by Divine right in the capital of a free people.

The present dilemma, is between giving up what we have got of our own, and securing it by taking more. If we are to escape the right way, it is hardly necessary to say, it must be by union, moderation, and neither being too hasty nor too slow. Let no man be frightened by the word "democracy." Democracy means the community's governing through its representatives for its own benefit, instead of the benefit of somebody else. All intimations that somebody else knows better what is for your good, are frauds when applied to a nation as far advanced in intelligence and habits of self-management as Great Britain. Give us the evidence, show us the institution, the association, in which the interest of the public was well attended to, except in proportion as the public had virtually the means of attending to it themselves? Is there any instance, any chance, of the affairs of a Company being promoted by the interference of four or five hundred born Directors? Would there be any prudence in such a combination long resisting the introduction of popular selection, after the popular attention had been concentrated on their performances?

I had another subject in some sort akin to this; which must be deferred to another time.

London, 26 Oct. 1836.

THE kindred subject intimated in my last, was a review of the current effects of monarchy in Europe; for the purpose of gathering what may improve our own.

No man that looks about him can help seeing, that a vast schism has extended, is extending, and if not stopped by the impact of a comet will continue to extend, through every part of Europe in proportion to its civilization, and the facilities which men have already attained in it for knowing what has been done and uttered by their fellows. The dispute is everywhere this,—whether the community shall be governed for its own interest, or the interest of somebody else. On one side the question loses itself in the submission of the races who have last emerged from gross barbarism, to their civil and religious rulers. And these races, under the guidance of those rulers, form themselves into masses of no small military and political weight, with the avowed object of supporting monarchy, absolute monarchy, wherever it shall be found capable of being supported. Monarchy everywhere has the Baschkirs and Cossacks on its side; and a mutual petting goes on between the two amiable parties, even where circumstances are unfavourable to the full enjoyment of their loves. The other or longer civilized races, all aim with more or less of distinctness according to their circumstances, either at republicanism, or at a mode of government which as far as regards securing the substantial benefits of self-government to the community, shall only differ from it in name.

Under these circumstances a moderated, or as it is called “constitutional” form of monarchy, has in many parts of the continent of Europe been set up as what Napoleon called a *vaccine*;—an inoculation of something by no means a good in itself, but useful as it may help to keep off some greater evil. Possibly there were two parties, who were tempted to acquiesce in this kind of middle term;—one, as glad of a shelter at any rate, from the gross evils of absolute monarchy; the other, as not unwilling to compromise for something which should have the effect of keeping out what they viewed with far greater apprehension.

For the last twenty years and upwards, an underhand struggle has been carried on between the two principles which divide the continent of Europe, chiefly under the form of local contests between absolute monarchy and this milder form of the disease. And the time has been sufficient, to throw a broad light on the internal defects and dangers of the hereditary, or as it may more properly be called the matrimonial principle. Scarce one of the inoculated sovereigns, but has been a traitor the instant he had it in his power, and has appealed to all his aunts and cousins within reach, for assistance against his people. The blame is on the idiotic invention, which makes the rulers of mankind a

distinct caste, and keeps them so by what the cattle-fanciers call breeding in-and-in. If masses of men did not lose their senses by the mere operation of their multitude, the last thing they would devise would be to set up a number of dumb idols, cut off from their birth from the chances of gaining experience like the rest of mankind, and say to them "Be cousins all, that when we control one of you, we may have the whole family upon our backs."

The way to see what the aggregate effects of this invention have been, is to compare the actual situation of the countries of Europe, with that of the countries to which republicanism was transmitted from Great Britain. Not that there are not enormous blots upon the conduct of the Transatlantic republicans; but they resolve themselves into the defects of the men, not of the institutions. As regards the power of promoting the welfare of those who are admitted to partnership in the machine, the success of the experiment has been complete. What would our Tories give, if they could see two or three rival Governors running up and down the United States at the head of armies, one holding out for the Holy Inquisition here, and another waiting to be joined by an armament of refugees from Genoa there? See the exultation they display, if the spirit of anarchy evolves itself in a contest with a constable, or the power of misrule attains to a list of wounded by the highly improper employment of a bludgeon. But in seriousness compare this with the situation of various parts of Europe under the boasted monarchical principle; the shootings, the sackings, the mutual slaughters, that take place under cover of determining whether one individual or another, each equally devoid of all the qualities which reason points to as required for the duties of government, shall sit upon four pieces of wood covered with velvet and called a throne. See in another place, a capital threatened with a cannonade, because a girl of seventeen and boy of nineteen put their finger in their eye, and profess themselves not satisfied with a Constitution. These are absurdities which there is no getting over. Systems of policy can stand anything but being ridiculous. And no man can have put away childish things without discovering, that the monarchical principle as exhibited on the continent, is a thing to be thought of only with extreme contempt. It has none of the adjuncts of greatness about it, none of the qualities to which civilized men are led to annex respect. It is all over petty and puerile; and founded on those nursery admirations and antipathies, which a healthy society must necessarily outgrow.

In one country only have things proceeded better. In Great Britain, from its insular situation and other causes, the monarchical principle has been so tamed and tempered, that saving a few judicial murders in the Tory times and an outbreak or two of yeomanry cavalry, there has been no blood shed within the country in consequence of the existence of royalty, for nearly a hundred years. The understanding with the community manifestly is, that monarchy exists on the condition of allowing us all the substantial benefits of the best republic. This compact with the Crown is refined and strengthened daily; and the Reform Bill is the newest and strongest indication of the rate at which the process is going on. There is no struggle in England for republicanism, precisely because there is no occasion for it; there is no substantial object of contest, which is not within reach of the community at present. From this proceeds the mighty calm, which exists in England on the questions that set the rest of Europe in a flame.

But the way to maintain this peace, is by keeping clear of causes of offence. English monarchy is as different from continental monarchy, as the *felis catus* of the naturalists, from the *felis leo*. One a sleek, harmless thing, that if it sometimes puts out its claws, at all events does little damage; the other, what we willingly look at only through a grate. Whatever, therefore, *lionizes* the English monarchy, is the work of no friend to kingship. We shall probably go on to the end of history, without any serious quarrel with the legacy of our rude forefathers, if good-natured friends of this kind can be kept out of the way. It is true, that numberless mischiefs will to a certain extent always try to gather about the throne. But what we cannot have in one way, we must try to take out in another. If we are doomed to have a weight on one side against us, we must make the greater exertions of our own, to put the vessel on an even keel. We must use the power we have, to pare away and throw overboard as many causes of mischief as we can; and after all, we must exercise the virtue of a quiet and moderate spirit, in comparing what may finally be unpleasant, with what it might have cost us to remove it.

Under such circumstances then, does it accord with common sense, that we should tempt our monarchs to connect themselves from time to time by marriage, with the petty despots of countries in a lower state of civilization and public freedom than our own? Supposing anything like a family invasion to be entirely out of the question to all futurity,—is there anything to be gained by nursing foreign predilections, and providing for foreign influence, in all that concerns the rearing and manage-

ment of the future king and queen-bees of our state? Shall we be the better for breeding our sovereigns German Tory?—for to that it comes in the end, whatever flashes of temporary interruption may occur.

In July 1834 a beginning was made, by a motion of Colonel Williams in the House of Commons, for leave to bring in a Bill “to repeal the 12th Geo. 3rd, c. 11, called the Royal Marriage Act, for the purpose of restoring to the Members of the Royal Family their just and natural rights, and to afford a prospect that the Government of England will, in time, be under an influence entirely English.”

At a period when there is an evident disposition to look into the business of the Lords, would it not be politic and convenient to do a little for the Crown?

I am, SIR, your obedient servant,
T. PERRONET THOMPSON.

END OF THE LETTERS.

**A RUNNING COMMENTARY
ON
ANTI-COMMERCIAL FALLACIES.**

[Reprinted from the *Spectator* London weekly newspaper, from 15 February to 26 June, 1834. It was proposed that a series of extracts from current proceedings, with the answers, should be continued from week to week under the above title. The object being to keep pace with the actual operations of the press, no necessity was felt for excluding the repetition of replies to the same objection, when found urged in new forms or places.]

1. The total amount of the sums levied in England and Wales on account of the poor, and of other public rates, exclusive of tithes, may be taken at about *ten* millions a-year; of which above two millions are levied from houses, mills, &c., leaving not quite eight millions to be defrayed by the land. It is not possible to form any precise

estimate of the value of tithes; but, taking them in England at three millions, we shall have a sum of eleven millions, which may be regarded as forming, for the most part, a peculiar burden on the land of England; to which about a million more may be added for Scotland. No estimate, having the smallest pretensions to accuracy, has been formed of the total annual value of the agricultural produce of the empire; but if such an estimate were formed, the countervailing duty on the importation of foreign corn, butter, cheese, beef, seeds, &c., should be an *ad valorem* one; bearing the same relation to the article on which it is laid, that the twelve millions of extra charge laid on the agriculturists bears to the entire value of their products.—*Edinburgh Review*, for January 1834, p. 275.

Answer. This is charging us for the poor-rates which the landlords have created by their Corn Laws; and for the tithes, which were never theirs at all. It is well the *Edinburgh Review* did not think of advising the landlords to charge for all that has been left to their younger brothers; for it is just as clear that the landlords might gain by it.

2. That the extent of the power and prosperity of every country, in a great measure depends upon the prosperous and advanced state of its agriculture.—*Kelso Corresponding Society for opposing the Abolition of the Corn Laws. 1st Resolution. Standard, January 29, 1834.*

3. That agriculture is one of the principal sources of the power of a nation, as the capital employed in this branch of industry, while it puts in motion a greater quantity of productive labour than any equal amount otherwise expended, adds also much more to the real wealth and revenue of a nation; and is, therefore, of all the ways in which capital can be employed, by far the most advantageous to the country.—*Ibid. 2d Resolution.*

4. That the object is to sow discord among the brotherhood of agriculture, manufactures, and commerce.—*Ib.*

5. But now we are told this fraternal bond must be destroyed.—*Ib.*

A. It depends upon *having corn*. The object of the Corresponding Society is, to grow a bushel of corn at a fraudulent price, for their own personal advantage, by tyrannically preventing the public from having *two* from other places. If the manufacturers laid a tax on home-grown corn, then *they* would be the tyrants.

A. Answered in the main, above. The assertion that the capital employed in agriculture has some peculiar virtue in setting labour in motion, is only saying, that one shilling's worth takes more making than another shilling's worth. It is precisely because labour of equal value is exerted in the making, that they are each a shilling's worth.

A. Give the manufacturers a duty on home-grown corn, and see how long the agriculturists will be kept quiet by talking of "the brotherhood."

A. Give the manufacturers the duty on home-grown corn, and then talk to the agriculturists of the cruelty of "this fraternal bond" being destroyed. The agriculturists cannot be made to understand, that their "fraternal bond" is of that species of *copula* which takes place when a man is found with his hand entangled in his neighbour's pocket.

6. That the amount of duty for guarding against an immoderate influx of foreign grain, is not greater than the average amount of duty imposed for the benefit of every production of manufactured industry.—*Ib.*

A. This, at the best, is only saying, "Let *us* rob because other people do." The whole system of mutual robbery is a fool's paradise.

But there is another answer, without entering on the question whether every "production of manufactured industry" ought or ought not to have what is called protection; which is, that the trade of the landlord is *not* industry, any more than the trade of the fund-holder. Land may be a very useful and desirable form for vesting property in; and so are the Funds. Many land-holders may both amuse themselves and promote their personal interest by looking after their landed property; and so do many fund-holders, by looking after their funded property. There may be men who make money by speculating in landed property; and so there are in funded. But it would be very odd if the fund-holders were allowed to come forward and say, "We are wronged men, and the fraternal union of society is dissolved, if we are not allowed to have an Act of Parliament to make the Five per Cents pay seven." It might be very agreeable; but it would be detestably unjust.

In so far as this may be met by transferring the question to the farmers and agricultural labourers, the answer is, that those classes are rapidly separating themselves from the landlords, and finding out that their interest is only in having the mischief *gradually* removed.

7. That, if the labourer pays 10 per cent on his bread, he pays it to enable, in most cases, his employer to employ him,—*Standard*, February 3, 1834.

A. A baby pulling at its own go-cart to get on. Ask the printers that print the *Standard*, to pay 10 per cent out of their wages, *to enable their employer to employ them.*

8. Is the agricultural interest too highly pampered? Is it too lightly loaded?—*Ib.*

A. The agricultural interest has tried to gain by the robbery of its neighbours; and, like most other people who have tried that course, its dishonesty, by the just arrangements of Providence, reacts upon itself, and it is in a most miserable way after all. This therefore makes no reason why, having despoiled others at the rate of seven millions a-year and done itself no good, it should try fourteen.

9. That these seven millions, if not given to the agricultural interest, would go to inflame the treasuries of princes, for whose peaceable disposition and conduct their poverty is the best security.—*Ib.*

10. Then, I am quite sure you will agree with me in this, (because it would amount to dishonesty if you did not), that capital, invested anywhere, is entitled to a fair and adequate return.—*Sir John Beckett's Speech at Leeds. Standard, January 30, 1834.*

11. The cry for an alteration in the Corn-laws proceeded from a base democratic spirit in the country, that wanted cheap bread for its fellows, no matter what injury the agriculturist sustained. If encouragement was given to foreign produce, some of the land in this country would not be cultivated.—*Lord Huntingfield's Speech at the Suffolk Meeting. Times, February 7, 1834.*

12. A cosmopolite and a contemner of the weakness which leads a man to express attachment to his "native land." — *Boston Herald, February 1, 1834.*

A. A new mode of conducting war, discovered by the landed interest. As your preparatory operation, cut off your foreign commerce. Because then, when your enemies think of going to war, they will find themselves weakened by the same amount.

The three last reasons are what the *Standard* puffs as its *Invincibles*.

A. Not capital invested upon speculation on the commission of injustice. If it was, the capital invested by the receivers of stolen goods would have a claim. There may be reasons why the evil should be removed gradually; none why it should be never removed at all.

A. If the manufacturers had got a tax on home-grown corn, would the agriculturists be satisfied with being told that "if encouragement was given to home-grown corn, some of the looms in this country would lie idle;" and that it was a base democratic spirit which wanted to sell corn, "no matter what injury the manufacturer sustained"?

A. What is to be contemned is, the blunder which maintains that anything is to be got by the invention of injustice at all. What is maintained is, that the "native land" is a loser by the attempt to injure foreigners, in the same manner as the little peddling dealer in

a market-town, who takes into his head that he is to get rich by injuring all his customers.

13. That the rents of the landlords are falling every year ; and, notwithstanding the great reduction which had in consequence resulted from the annual decrease, the prosperity of the farmer was on the decline.—*Times*. House of Commons, February 19, 1834.

A. Quite true ; and the necessary consequence of their own stupid injustice. They have shut up the country by Act of Parliament, so that it breeds paupers to be kept, instead of people able to buy corn. Therefore, says the wisdom of the acres, shut us all up closer.

14. There was, moreover, a party in that house representing the manufacturing interest, who, as soon as the malt tax was repealed would naturally say, " Give us foreign corn free." (*Hear.*) —*Ib.*

A. If you cease burning the candle at one end, somebody will call out to cease burning it at the other. Therefore go on burning at both.

15. The honourable member had talked of a monopoly which the agriculturists held ; certainly there was one, and which he felt assured they would be too happy to give up—it was the monopoly of having to pay more than double the amount of poor-rates paid by the manufacturing districts.—*Ib.*

A. The agriculturists create the poor-rates by prohibiting men's keeping themselves ; and then advance the payment of them as a reason for upholding their own nuisance. If they dislike the smell of carrion, why do they insist on muzzling the mouth of the beast till he dies of hunger ?

16. The honourable member had said a great deal of the monopoly, as he termed it, of the landed interests, but there was a much greater monopoly existing in the commercial world ; inasmuch as merchants were enabled, by means of their

A. A landlord's idea of monopoly. The landlord prohibits trade by Act of Parliament ; but the other side have " a much greater monopoly," in the privilege of selling when they can.

17. He was persuaded in his own mind, that a repeal of the corn laws would be

enabled, by means of their immense capital, to keep very large quantities of foreign corn in their warehouses, and introduce them into the English market whenever they pleased, to the great injury of the grower.—*Ib.*

A. Leave the manufacturers to take care of themselves. Has anybody heard of exportation that was

equally injurious to the manufacturing interest. The exportation of English manufactures would not only be greatly diminished, but the price would be very materially affected.—*Ib.*

diminished by removal of prohibition on foreign markets, or price that was lowered by being able to take the great offer of goods instead of the little one? How long will the manufacturers endure the bitter joke of being thus legislated for?

18. He wished to take that opportunity to correct a misapprehension that had gone abroad with regard to what he had stated as the doctrine of Mr. McCulloch on the subject of an alteration in the corn-laws. He had been represented as saying that the effect of the plan would be to throw five hundred thousand agricultural labourers on the poor rates. What he said was, that Mr. McCulloch was of opinion that if these men were thrown out of employment by the scheme he had proposed, they would be able to obtain it elsewhere, to which opinion certainly he could not agree. Mr. McCulloch, however, was not speaking of a total but a partial removal of the corn-laws.—*Times.* House of Commons, 18th February, 1834.

A. Millions of men in different parts of the country are prevented by law from selling the produce of their labour, in order that half a million of other men may be brought into employment. And when this piece of cruel folly is remonstrated against, the answer is. "Do not you see, you must throw out of employment the half million, who will never find employment." *Do the millions ever find employment?*

19. The great grievance of the country was the malt-tax, the next grievance was the hop-duty, and the third the soap-tax.—*Ib.*

A. A mere red-herring like what the orator when a little boy, scampered before the squire's dogs with. As if malt, hops, and soap, were nearer to a man's soul than corn. Better be insulted by our plunderers as the "great unwashed," than the "great unfed."

20. That the distress of the agricultural interests is mainly attributable to the low price of corn.—*Guar-*

A. A low price of home-grown corn, under the operation of duties like the present, can be the result of nothing but there being more of it

dian and Public Ledger. Parliamentary Proceedings, 5th February, 1834.

than at some antecedent period ; with the single exception, that there should have been an extraordinary fall in foreign corn. Unluckily it happens, that at this moment there is more talk of a continental famine than the contrary. Unless therefore the agriculturists mean to say that they pray for a bad crop instead of a good one, and present themselves to Parliament for compensation against a good harvest, their claim from the low price of corn is naught.

21. Having paid more attention to the subject of our agricultural and commercial distress, perhaps, than any other person in the Riding, it is proper that his sentiments on it should be more fully stated. They are these:—That our distress has arisen from prices being too low to leave a profit after the taxation was paid ; and that it is the *want of employment* from this cause, that has *distressed the labouring class*. The prices he wishes to see prevail, it is well known, are 8s. a bushel for wheat ; from 52s to 60s. per cwt. for new milk cheese ; 1s. a pound of 16 ounces for wool ; 1s. a pound of 16 ounces for butter ; and other produce in proportion. He also prefers the present corn laws (with an improved mode of taking the averages) to a fixed duty.—*County Paper*. Committee at the last General Election.

A. Could not the manufacturers put forth how much they would like to have for cloth ? Jack Cade was nothing to it.

A people that can read and write, cannot be far from finding out, that all attempts to settle by law what prices a man shall have because he likes it, are larcenies. This is the true faith ; which he that does not believe, shall without doubt be pilaged everlastingly.

22. But there is another consideration which must not be lost sight of, which is, that if wheat was introduced into England at the extraordinary low price which we have assumed, what is to become of the 6,300,000 persons depending upon English agriculture ? They would of

A. Shut out the bread you want, that you may *keep* the people to whom you will give an extraordinary price for what you shall get. Beware of altering this ; because then the people you cease to keep will come back for a share of the labour market, and by far the best way, is to keep them outright. Besides, if you do not keep them, how can they buy

course be subjected to great privations, and the diminished demand on their parts for manufactured goods, would probably counterbalance the increased demand of foreigners. Moreover, a vast proportion of them would be thrown upon the labour-market, and would

gradually enter into competition with the workmen in the manufacturing districts, and thus have a tendency to reduce their wages.—*True Sun*, 17th February 1834. *Letter of William Pare.*

your goods? What use is there in your selling to foreigners for corn, if the people that you pay for at home should take away their custom?

This is literally what is told to the working classes by their own leaders of the blind.

23. My position then is this:—that in all probability a repeal of the corn laws would not materially, if at all, reduce the cost of food in this country: but that if it did do so, it would end in benefiting the capitalists merely. The benefit to the working classes would be short-lived indeed, lasting only till, in the language of the competitive political economists “things found their own level.” Let not the working classes deceive themselves. With our vast and constantly increasing productive powers, owing to the rapid improvements in mechanics and chemistry, and so long as commerce shall be conducted on the present competitive principles, whatever the working classes may gain by a reduction in the cost of the comforts and necessities of life, it will last only, (as very truly observed by the *Westminster Review*), “till their employers can find an oppor-

A. The *Westminster Review* said more than this. It said that though population and the consequent fall of wages would in time carry the price of corn to its former height if the quantity of corn attainable stood still at any imaginable amount, the chance of the working people lay in the attainable quantity of corn being always a day’s march before the mischief; in short, upon the quantity being always increasable, as it was with Noah. A people that allow themselves to be shut up, whether at the advice of Jack or Peter, will have plenty of time to find out their mistake.

The false light thrown out by the misleaders of the operatives, is that they are to mend themselves by some operation upon the currency, or by making their masters give the old wages for a day’s work of eight hours. Fancy a ship at sea short of provisions; and ask what either of these schemes would do for it. If we are not to be allowed to go to the port where corn is, what could come of it at the most, but that we should starve with eight hours work a-day, instead of twelve? The Lord help

tunity to screw them out of the amount by the reduction of their wages."—*Ib.*

the oppressed poor. It is a sad thing to be poor and foolish.

24. That the Trades' Unions are organizing themselves for a social revolution and an attack on private property.—*Guardian and Public Ledger*, 17th February, 1834.

A. It is likely enough. This comes of the rich trying to pillage the poor on the strength of their being ignorant. There is no use in baiting a bull, and then complaining that he does mischief in a china-shop. The operatives only know that they are injured; and like the bull, they will

run *a-muck* where heaven pleases. The fault was with the minister, that said he "would not" put down the wrong.

25. There were two ways of making bread cheap;—by making money abundant, and by a reduction of price, neither of which he thought would be effected by a repeal of the corn laws.—*Times*. House of Commons, 20th February, 1834.

A. This is confounding a diminution of price from a greater quantity of corn, with the juggle of lowering prices by the fabrication of fictitious money. The effect of the last of which, is to cheat the operative of all that his wages may lag behind the due proportion.

26. It was an error to suppose that by making bread cheap, the means by which it was obtained would not also be reduced.—*Ib.*

A. Corn can only become cheap, by there being more of it. And if the means by which it is obtained are reduced, there will not be more, but less. Either, therefore, there will be more corn obtained, or the price will not be reduced.

27. In his judgment a reduction of the price of corn would occasion a proportional reduction of wages. It reminded him of what Dr. Johnson said, "Eggs were cheap in Scotland because pence were few."—*Ib.*

A. There would not be a reduction of price, unless there was more corn, and the labourer in consequence got a greater share. There would be some reduction of wages, but not a proportional reduction; for if there was, the increased quantity of corn could not be bought; and nobody would continue to import what was not bought. Dr. Johnson's may be a good joke,

but is a miserable commercial truth to legislate upon. Eggs are cheap in Scotland, because they are plentiful compared with the people who are to eat them, and there are not the means of carrying them to other markets. If every man in the egg countries had his pence doubled by a pension, he would not eat many more eggs, and the price of eggs would hardly alter.

28. That the cry of cheap bread is nothing but a clap-trap.—*Ib.*

A. Give the manufacturers a tax on home-grown corn, and see if the landlords will be satisfied that the cry against it is nothing but a clap-trap.

29. That the proportion which wages bore to the price of bread was what should be looked to; for if a poor man earned only 6*d.* a-day and got his loaf for 3*d.*, it would be the same thing as if he earned 1*s.* and paid 6*d.* for it.—*Ib.*

A. But the fact is, that when he is to give 6*d.* for his loaf, he is to find he has only 10*d.* for his wages.

30. There seemed to be an opinion that the faith of the country was pledged to the fundholder, but in his opinion it was pledged to the farmer, whose property had been twisted out of his hands by the acts of that house, while the fundholders have received the payment of their paper loans in standard gold. There was a great delicacy on the subject of the national debt, but in his opinion it must be touched ere long, and that with great severity. If something was not speedily done, the consequence would be that troubles would thicken around them, and the national debt would fall under

A. This is what comes of sitting down quietly under one kind of dishonesty,—that others creep up by the stalk. If the Corn-law robbery is to go on, why should not the fundholders be robbed too? There is no good reason; and they *will* be, if they have not the brains to put down the other. “Caw me, caw thee,” will probably be the arrangement between the reivers of the land and the reivers of the sponge.

As to the fundholders having received the payment of their paper loans in standard gold, everybody knows the real fact to be, that they were first robbed *en masse* by Pitt’s currency fraud, and afterwards during the process of return to an honest currency, some of the latest purchasers instead of receiving less than

the ruins itself had created.
—*Ib.*

the value of what they paid for, received something more; the balance on the whole account, being some eight millions and a half against the fundholders, which they ought to have now if they could get it.

31. As to the corn laws, he would only say, that it was impossible the farmers of this country could compete with the corn of those parts of Europe, which was brought down to the water-side by men who were paid at the rate of 1s. per week. —*Times*. House of Commons, 21st February, 1834.

A. That is precisely the reason why the farmer should *not* compete. Suppose the manufacturers were to say, "We cannot compete with foreign manufacturers as we should like to do, unless we have a tax on home-grown corn." Would not the landlords reply, "Ye be knaves; and shall hang first."

32. Parliamentary taxes are as nothing; the poor-rates are the great evil. —*Ib.*

A. The landlords make the poor-rates; by prohibiting people's keeping themselves.

33. They were called upon to adopt a remission of taxation, and a remission, too, which should have the effect of burdening to a still greater extent the distressed part of the community, and giving increased advantages to those who were already in prosperous circumstances. Was that the wisdom which should govern the decisions of Parliament? —*Ib.*

A. Oppress millions of your people, with a view to put money in the pockets of half a million. And when this trumpery scheme breaks down by the discovery that the misery reaches the robbers in the end, say that the robbers are the distressed part, and that this is not the time to remove the oppression of the millions. This is the wisdom of at least one part of Parliament.

34. But the noble lord said, that if they relieved the manufacturing interest it would benefit the land; but the converse, however, of that proposition was equally true,—that if you relieved the land, and put the agriculturist in a good

A. Not where the suffering of the whole community is arising out of the injustice practised by the land on manufactures and commerce. If the injury were committed by the manufactures upon the land, the landlords would not admit the horrible logic advanced.

It is not clear that the noble lord

situation, you at the same time advanced the interests of manufactures and commerce.—*Ib.*

alluded to (Althorp), does not see farther into the mill-stone than he chuses to say just now. His speeches on this day are worth looking at in that view.

35. In the 150 years preceding 1793, the price of wheat was 50s. ; since that time the average price was 48s. 9d. It was therefore most unreasonable to say that the agriculturists could be prejudiced by any particularly high prices for the last forty years.—*Ib.*

A. The question for the community, is not whether prices have been more or fewer shillings and pence, but whether the country has been shut up, and universal misery brought on by preventing it from having the food it might have had.

36. What made the poor-rates so heavy in this country? Not the poor themselves, bound down as they were by Sturges Bourne's Act, by the law of settlement, and enactments innumerable.—*Ib.*

A. The Corn Laws, which make the poor.

37. He [the opponent] wished, first, to change the present for a fixed duty, and then to descend in the scale of that duty until at last no duty would be left at all. Now, he would endeavour to grapple with this argument openly, and would contend that such incessant changes would be most injurious to the country.—*Times*, 7th March, 1834. House of Commons.

A. Then let them make the change all at once. Like the patient of the Irish drummer, there is no pleasing them. To take off the duties all at once, they say would be utterly ruinous to them; and when it is proposed to do it gradually to gratify them, they find out that the incessant changes would be most injurious to the country.

38. The honourable gentleman had said, with somewhat of whimsical inconsistency, that a free trade in

A. A population that is allowed to keep itself, is not surplus. The population ordered to be starved to enrich the landed aristocracy, is surplus only

corn would have a tendency to increase the population, while he at the same time admitted that our surplus population was a great evil, for which emigration was the only cure.—*Ib.*

because it is more than the aristocracy will allow to keep itself.

39. Besides, he could not help remarking the fact, that the change now sought for was asked at the very moment when the manufacturers of the country were in full employment, and when the only portion of the labouring community who did

A. Why are the working people at Oldham on twopence-halfpenny a-day? By "full employment" was probably meant "employment that is full of people and too many."

really lack employment were the agricultural labourers.—*Ib.*

40. The hon. mover had also rather whimsically referred to the protecting duty on corn, which had existed for the last six years—viz. 6s. 8d. per quarter; he said whimsically, because the operation of his own recommended measure would be to create a positive increase of the protective duty to 10s. per quarter.—*Ib.*

A. This only proves that the mover was not master of his subject. He had better have taken the opinion of his Petitioners, than load the question with pegs for an enemy to hang an obstacle upon. Assuredly no man who had got to the bottom of his case, would have *debouched* with such a proposal. If the object was to relieve the community, why not support the prayer of the Petitioners for the gradual removal of the existing duties, without giving the enemy another

previous change to fight upon? The other proposal (setting out of sight the odd effect of beginning by increasing the duty from 6s. 8d. to 10s.) is explicable only by the interference of a desire in some quarter, to gain the increased chance of stopping *at some duty or other*. The seconder and mover should change places.

41. Both the honourable mover and seconder of the motion had dwelt on the benefit which would be felt by the agriculturists themselves from the success of their recommendations, and that they afforded them the

A. Fair enough. Only let the manufacturers, on the other side, not be over hastily expected to agree, that it is for their interest to keep the landed aristocracy.

safest protection. Now he would observe, that however imperfect the understanding of the agricultural labourers might be, they would in a question of the kind then before the house form a judgment for themselves — *Ib.*

42. Mr. Huskisson said, "During upwards of a hundred years, up to the year 1765, the import of foreign corn was restrained by very high duties. What was the state of the country during those hundred years? That, in ordinary seasons, our own growth supplied a stock of corn fully ample for our consumption,—that, in abundant seasons, we had some to spare, which we exported,—that, in bad seasons, we felt no want, and were under no apprehension,—that the price of corn seldom varied more than a few shillings per quarter,—that we had no years of inordinate gain to the farmer, and of starvation to the consumer,—that prices, instead of rising from year to year, were gradually diminishing, so that at the end of this long period of a century, during which we never imported foreign corn, they were actually one-fifth lower than at the beginning of it. Would to God that we had continued this salutary system!" — *Ib.*

would have found that his waited at his bidding.

43. To this opinion Mr. Huskisson always adhered. He had always considered a

A. See what all this means, being interpreted. You shut the people up, and say they shall not increase to more than can be permanently (or with temporary exceptions) supported on the produce of a given quantity of land. Of course they *do not* increase. If one year, for instance, in five should be extraordinarily productive, they of course can afford to export; because they have not been busy increasing the number of mouths in all the ordinary years, and cannot do it to much purpose in one. If one year in five is a year of scarcity, the letting-in a moderate quantity of corn, will get the people over that ditch, and then go on as before. But all this is only meant to hide the fact, that there is an average and continual depression of the increase, wealth, and power of the community. The community is desired to look at the small difference between the best times and the worst, and jump the fact that they are all made worse in the lump than they need to be. Of course the magnitude of the gross or aggregate evil depends upon the degree in which men have approached to the full cultivation of the licensed land; and therefore goes on increasing. If Mr. Huskisson had lived, he

"salutary system" would not have

A. What *could* move the mover, to embarrass himself with such a needless drag as the fixed duty? Why

fixed scale of duty dangerous, because it would have a tendency to bring the Government into collision with the consumers.—*Id.*

will not statesmen go the straight way to work, instead of the in-and-out?

44. He should now beg the attention of the House to the following extract from the pamphlet of Mr. Ricardo on protection to agriculture, published in the year 1822 : —“ A tax affecting the producer exclusively is, in fact, a bounty to that amount on the importation of the same commodity from abroad; and to restore competition to its just level, it would be necessary not only to subject the imported commodity to an equal tax, but to allow a drawback of equal amount on the exportation of the home-made commodity. The growers of corn are subject to some of these peculiar taxes, such as tithes, a portion of the poor-rates, and perhaps one or two other taxes, all of which tend to raise the price of corn, and other raw produce, equal to those peculiar burdens. By imposing tithes, &c. on the farmer exclusively, no obstacle would be opposed to him, if there were no foreign competition, because he would be able to raise the price of his produce; and if he could not do so, he would quit a trade which no longer afforded him the usual and ordinary profits of all other trades. But if importation was allowed, an undue encouragement would be given to the importation of foreign corn, unless the foreign commodity were subject to a duty equal to tithes or any exclusive tax, imposed on the home grower.” —*Id.*

A. The misery of politico-economizing for the pot. A sect of political economists, operated on by the powerful principle of *quod volumus credimus*, undertook to maintain that tithes and poor-rates were paid out of the price of bread; being dazzled by the idea of setting the people on the back of a Church they disliked. And now see how it is turned into an argument for keeping the landed aristocracy in some way or other on the toil of the other classes of the community. If tithes injure the community, it is by a comparatively small amount, which might be removed to-morrow by a fair commutation which should change the form of levying. Poor-rates are paid by town property as well as country; though it is the country gentlemen and not the town, that say to the poor-rates “ Be,” and they are so. The people may see now, what comes of trying to direct a false argument against the Church. Perhaps this may lead some persons also to see the importance of getting a fair commutation of tithes, as a step to the abolition of the Corn Laws.

45. He was sure that there were few members in that house who would not fully agree with him that the first operation of the change, if it should ever be carried into effect, would be to diminish the demand for human labour; and he would ask, what then was to become of our surplus population?—*Ib.*

46. It would immediately operate upon the manufacturing classes so as to produce a depression of wages; that again must act injuriously upon the interests of agriculture, by diminishing the demand for agricultural produce; and so the whole operation would proceed in a vicious circle, and one body of labourers would go on displacing another, until the manufacturing interest themselves would be forward to regret that there ever had been a free trade in corn; and he hesitated not to predict that the ultimate effect would be the total destruction of the manufacturing interest of the country.—*Ib.*

47. Were they to look to the interests of the countries of the European Continent, or to the colonies which they had themselves planted, or to Ireland, which was an integral portion of the United Kingdom?—*Ib.*

48. Steadiness of price was everything.—*Ib.*

A. The house is worse than people think it, if there are. How is a diminution of demand for labour to arise out of allowing men to sell the labour of their hands? A piece of baby's alchemy; stop men from working, that you may make other men work more.

A. How is a depression of manufacturing wages to be produced by allowing manufactures to be sold? Is it not much more likely that the scheme which begins with creating wealth by prohibition, is a juggle and a trick, than the scheme which begins with enacting liberty?

A. They are to look to themselves. "We will not keep *anybody*; fair play for all the world, and for ourselves among the rest; let every man that has anything to sell be allowed to do it, and no robbery of one to please another." This is what the people of England are marching upon.

A. Not steadiness at robbers' price. There is a great deal to be said upon that "everything."

49. He would repeat that such a sudden change would be equivalent to an agrarian law.—*Ib.*

A. It would not have been unreasonable to expect, that an individual holding a share in the government of a country, should have known what the Agrarian Law was. It was a demand of the Roman army and people, for their pay and prize-money in the shape of their share of the conquered lands; and is the *first* grand instance upon record, of the wholesale robbery of a people by their aristocracy; the Corn Laws being the next in rank if not in time.

50. Was the landlord to be stripped of his rents, the farmer of his profits, and the labourer of his wages and his comforts, to support the theories of the honourable member for Middlesex?—*Morning Post*, 7th March 1834. House of Commons.

A. Is the capitalist to be stripped of his returns, the manufacturer of his profits, and the operative of his wages and his comforts, to support the theories of the member for anywhere else? And this, be it always remembered, not by the removal of an injury upon others, but by the imposition of a positive wrong;—not by leaving things to their natural course, but by painfully walking out of the course of nature.

51. When the honourable gentleman spoke of the justice of giving cheap bread to the manufacturing labourer, did he forget the justice of giving employment and sustenance to the agricultural labourer?—*Morning Post*, 7 March 1836. House of Commons.

A. Not by making the manufacturing labourer pay for it. Give the manufacturers a tax on home-grown corn for nineteen or twenty years; and see what the agriculturists will say to the *justice* of giving employment and sustenance to the manufacturing labourer. There is no driving into people, that the question of robbery or no robbery, is the turning-point on which the whole depends.

52. Was not property in land to be attended to as much as any other property?—*Ib.*

A. Not the property in land that has been begotten in fraud and raised up in robbery.

53. The question would most deeply injure the small proprietors.—*Ib.*

A. The very men who most suffer by the final consequences. Ask a small proprietor what he does with his children. And even if it were not so, suppose the case of any other set of men having a proprietorship in wrong, as for instance the receivers of stolen goods;—what would be the use of saying, “the question would deeply injure the small proprietors”?

54. That all men’s interests are identical.—*Ib.*

A. This may be twisted into as many meanings as the man in the streets twists a sheet of paper. It means one thing, if it means that all men’s interests, on being thoroughly and truly understood, tend towards a common rule. This is *utilitarianism*. It means another, if it means that because men’s interests are the same, therefore pull down all courts of *Nisi Prius*, inasmuch as it is impossible that plaintiff and defendant should differ in opinion. This is *babyism*. And it means another, if it means that because men’s interests are the same, it is our interest to support the man that lives by robbing on the highway. This is *knavery*. There is very little utilitarianism talked where this comes from.

55. That it is admitted the price of corn would not be lowered.—*Ib.*

A. This is what always comes of trying to catch adversaries by putting a little salt upon their tails. If the people’s advocates had stated, that by reducing the duty gradually, any alteration of price might be caused to be gradual also, they would have kept within the bounds of reason, and not have given their opponents occasion to turn round upon them.

The opponents, however, commit an equal folly in their mode of answering. For if it was true that prices would not be reduced, what would they have to protest against? by prices being always meant, substantial prices; for without that, on either side, there is a juggle. The fallacy is like that of the negro-drivers on East-India sugar;—“Sugar you will find will be no cheaper; but we shall be ruined nevertheless.”

56. The silk-weavers are now complaining that in consequence of the recent

A. Hanging one man’s plunder of the public, upon another man’s plunder of the public; and finally try-

law to admit foreign silks, they are ruined. But does anybody accuse them of wanting "a monopoly" in silk? They say, let us have as *cheap bread as the French*, and then let French silks come in; and the

farmers say, let us have as little tax on the windows, the malt, the hops, the beer, the soap, the candles, the leather, used by us, our labourers, smiths and wheelwrights, as the French farmers have, and then let French corn come in. And have not the farmers as much reason on their side as the weavers have?—*Weekly Political Register*, 1st March 1834, p. 145.

57. Aye, but the landlords want "high rents." Who does not want to make the most of his property or his labour?—*Ib.*

58. The landlords, like other men, wish to obtain the *full worth* of their property; and it is not in the nature of things, that on an average, they should get *more* than that. And, do not *you* wish to get the *full worth* of your labour, which is *your property*?—*Ib.*

59. The landlords are charged with wanting to *force* people to give them "exorbitant" rents, just in the same way, and with as much reason, as *you*, when *you combine* for a rise of wages, are charged with wanting to *force* the people to give you

ing to prop up both, by the pretence of men's having a right to plunder the public because they pay taxes. It is all trying to be rich by plundering one another.

A. All flesh is not the same flesh; and all property is not the same property. There is one flesh of honest property, and another flesh of dishonest. The landlords say there shall be nobody in Parliament but landlords; and then make the weavers keep them. Let the weavers at least have turn and turn about.

A. The landlords raise the value of their property by robbery; and if *you* did so, *you* would be hanged. The plea that they cannot on an average get more than the worth, is on a level with the argument that should say, a highwayman could never get more than the value of his beat.

A. The landlords go to Parliament and make their own laws there. They might *combine* as long as they liked, if they would not combine in an Act of Parliament. Can the workmen provide themselves with Acts of Parliament?—Is there any injustice in this?

These are the heaviest attempts to

"exorbitant" wages; for it is the *people* who pay for your labour at last, as it is the people who at last pay the rents. But, when workmen *strike* for more wages, do I, or does any just man, ever *blame* them? Why then are we to blame landlords for getting the full worth of their lands? Is there any injustice in this?—*Ib.*

60. Now then, my friends, reason like men of sense; and do not be misled by stupid newspaper-brawlers, who cry out for *cheap bread*, without saying a word about the taxes; and who seem to entertain the ridiculous wish, that the owners of land may be made to pay their present taxes, and to starve in the highways themselves.—*Ib.*

61. If England should become dependent on foreign countries for corn; the advocates of cheap corn may rely upon it that we shall buy not at the cost which foreign nations could afford to sell, but at an advanced price commensurate with our own want of supply. — *Standard*, 3rd March 1834. *Letter of Cato.*

62. What has ruined so many farmers in the last twenty years? The poor's rates. (On one farm I occupied in Hampshire, they were 25s. in the pound on the rent, and on another 7s. 8d.) What made the poor's rate so high? Want of employment for able-bodied men. What caused

A. The meaning of the landlords is here as plainly declared as needs be. They mean that they will not pay taxes, or not unless somebody else repays them. This is the English of the matter. They were the men who laid on the taxes; but they never meant to lay them upon themselves.

A. Be assured we will not buy, unless it be cheaper than we buy now. Suppose men were confined to one baker, and were told, "Depend upon it, if you go to other bakers, they will charge you not what they can afford, but what they think you will give." Would the child that said so, ever hold his head up afterwards?

A. Nimrod is a man of genius, foaled among fox-hunters. Cannot Nimrod discern the possibility that the very poor's rates he complains of, may have been created by the Corn Laws? He shuts up the population on a given quantity of food, and says "Breed up to that, and no further." The first that must stop breeding in consequence, will necessarily be the

the want of employment? Low prices of corn, which deprived the occupiers of land of the means to cultivate it to its full extent, and in the best manner. What is the proposed remedy for want of employment? Still lower prices! — *Age*, 9th March 1854. *Nimrod on the Corn Laws*.

manufacturers; for to the agricultural labourers it will for a time give something of a flush. But this cannot last for ever, and when they have bred up to the mark, farmers and their labourers must breed against the impossibility of being kept, as much as other people. Where did the claimants for 25s. in the pound come from, but from the impossibility of finding employment for the people that were bred? If trade had been free, the farmers might have bred sailors, merchants, clerks, manufacturers, instead of producing children that nobody can employ. But says Nimrod, "Try again. Shut us up a little closer, and see what that will do." It is very easy to say what it would do. It would produce a temporary flush, or at all events diminution of pressure, followed by more evil than ever. The farmers therefore have to chuse, between 25s. in the pound poor's rates for ever, or retracing their steps, at the expense, most likely, of some immediate loss. They have got into the bush, and they must either stay there, or take what pricking may befall them in getting out. Nimrod is quite a sufficient man to see into this; and if he has a nag in England he would like to bestride again, he had better think of it.

68. That it is attempted to be shown that Open Ports will very little affect prices, and that foreign wheat could not be imported at much less cost than the English farmer can grow it. 'Tis false! It is now imported into Liverpool at 28s. per quarter. And I don't wonder at it; for when I was in Germany six years ago, Baron Biel offered to sell a thousand quarters of good wheat (he was then making brandy of it, within fifty-six miles of Hamburg, for want of a market), at 20d. a bushel; and when Count Bassewitz of the

A. Let not Nimrod disturb himself on this head. It was only the talk of men reckoning without their host, or else thinking to make fools of their enemies. There is no difficulty in seeing that the price in England must fall considerably, which is exactly what the people of England want, and that the price on the Continent must rise, but considerably less; though the shock might be eased off in any degree that was desired, by making the reduction of duty gradual, as is asked for. Let not the landlords think they have nobody to deal with, but those who believe that prices would not be reduced.

But all that is stated by Nimrod is only proof of the intense folly of the

same country, was told that he had three hundred acres of wheat spoiled that year in the field, he said in my presence, "D—n the wheat, I care nothing about it, for it is worth nothing." Now what is to raise the price of this wheat so greatly all at once?—*1b.*

people here and in Germany, in allowing their respective governments to agree in a system, which starves the English manufacturer for want of Count Bassewitz's wheat, and obliges Count Bassewitz to "d—n" his wheat as worthless, while people on this side the water are dying to give him the manufactures for it that would make him rich. And all this, that an overbearing interest on each

side the sea,—the landlords here, and the manufacturers there,—may dream they pocket something by the general loss. The House of Commons may giggle at the idea of a "European interest;" but the friends of free trade in corn see the game before them. But then, says the wisdom of the Corn Laws, if you were allowed to take Count Bassewitz's corn, the Count's government would not allow him to take your manufactures. What then? We might be able to buy less of the Count's corn, or by an extreme possibility, as little as we do now; but should we be the worse for getting all we could?

Nimrod is quite able to see into these things; and though, as Mrs. Cole says, "his day of grace is not come," it may.

64. He denied that England was essentially a manufacturing country. It was essentially an agricultural country. By the returns in 1831 it appeared that in Great Britain there were in all—Agricultural population and its dependencies 10,210,000; Manufactures 4,716,000; leaving a balance of between five and six millions of people for the preponderance of agriculture. — *Morning Post*. House of Commons. 20th March 1834.

A. A facetious argument; to give up all dispute that might be had upon the terms. The agriculturists say to the manufacturers, "By the right by which our ancestors slept with your wives, you shall have no foreign commerce beyond the quantity required for our benefit. *Therefore* you shall be few; and because you are few, we will oppress you on." The highwaymen might as well plead, that they had pillaged the honest men till they outnumbered them.

65. They might call the landed proprietors monopolists if they would; but if they were the means of

A. "They might call the gentlemen-collectors on the highway, by an ugly name if they would; but if they were the means of keeping two hun-

keeping twenty millions [of people] employed, the merely calling them by the ugly name of monopolists would not furnish a sufficient reason for destroying them. ("Hear, hear!")—*Ib.*

dred ostlers and thousands of other people employed, the ugly name would not furnish a sufficient reason for destroying them." ("Hear, hear.")

The key in both cases is, that the employment in the first place comes dishonestly,—and secondly, is given at the expense of the destruction of a much greater quantity of employment in an honest way.

66. We some time ago altered our Navigation Laws, and adopted what was called the reciprocity system, which France very willingly took advantage of to send her silks and wine into this country. But did she in return receive our iron or coals? ("Hear, hear, hear!")—*Ib.*

A. A mere effort to persuade people to reject one advantage because they do not get two. When England took French silks and wine, she made a great aggregate gain, and France another. When France has the sense to take English iron and coals, she will make a great aggregate gain, and England another. If France has not the sense to do this, the more fool she; but it is no reason why Englishmen with heads on their shoulders should decline to do the other.

The Corn-law people are in a great hurry with their arguments drawn from France. They are afraid the next post should bring news of the French government having been obliged to admit English iron and coals*.

67. The philosophers of Germany were all conspiring to shut out our manufactures from that country. They were willing for a few years longer to take our yarn, because they had not got the capital and machinery necessary to spin for themselves; and he asked, were we to sacrifice the in-

A. The interests of the six-sevenths of the population are sacrificed as it is. The rogues in grain are obliged to get the King to come to Parliament and say, their robbery is a bad business after all, and they are starving on it. The jolter-heads have cut their own throats and other people's. They have had their way; they have had their full swing of rob-

* For later and clearer statements on the subject of *reciprocity*, see the Letter to the Hull "Rockingham," of 26 June 1835, and to the Secretary of the Hull Reform Association, of 15 Oct. 1836; which will be found in pages 109 and following, of the present volume.

terests of six-sevenths of the population for the sake of two or three years' trade in yarn?—*Ib.*

68. The honourable member for Middlesex had said, that all he wanted was to "unshackle" corn. Now, wool had been unshackled in 1825; and what was the consequence? After 1826 the growing of wool became so bad a trade, in consequence of the foreign competition, that a great part of the sheep lands were ploughed up; and this led to a scarcity of wool and the present high prices.—*Ib.*

69. Nor did the honourable gentleman say anything of the interest which this country had in encouraging the agriculture of Ireland. ("Hear!")—*Ib.*

let her not give five shillings to the Irishman through the intervention of a prohibition of cheap corn, which makes it cost twenty to herself. Let commerce be legalized, and the commercial interests pay a *direct* black-mail to the owners of the soil, instead of an indirect one that costs four times what the moss-trooper receives. There is no objection to the landlords being kept; they are our lords and masters, and we are bound to do it. The objection is to keeping them in a wasteful way.

70. Was there no other monopoly but that possessed by the agriculturist? It was true that the petition asked for free trade generally. He certainly was not astonished to hear the merchants of Liverpool ask for free trade generally; but did the ma-

bing their neighbours; and now they are obliged to get the King to say they cannot go on without help.

A. If wool is dear now, what do the agriculturists want? Do they come to complain that the measure of 1825 has raised the price of wool? But they know very well, that what they mean to complain of, is not its being dearer, but cheaper; and that their grievance is, that other people have not been cheated in the price of wool as they might have been.

A. If England has an interest in putting certain sums of money annually or weekly into the pockets of any conceivable individuals in Ireland respectively, let her do it by a direct payment. Let her, for instance, devote a certain portion of the revenue to the support of Irish landlords. But

A. The cunning are always super-subtle. Many thanks for explaining to the manufacturers, that they must infallibly pay through the nose for the great robbery of the agriculturists, so long as they go about trying to keep up their own little niggling robberies of the public and of one

manufacturers of England join in this prayer?—*Ib.*

another. A petty workman cannot be expected always to see into this; but where are the mercantile men of England, once held to be a race intelligent in their generation?

71. A restriction on the import of corn was no more an inroad upon the rights of the people than was a restriction upon the import of manufactured cotton.—*Ib.*

A. Certainly not. Who said the contrary? But see how long two countries like France and England, that can read and write, will go on keeping up one job and public loss, for the sake of preserving another job and public loss? The Free-Traders on both sides the water are in a fine position; and their enemies know it.

72. The manufacturers were quite mistaken if they thought the abolition of the monopoly of the landlords in the sale of corn would not be followed by the abolition of the monopoly of the manufacturers, and by making the import of foreign manufactures as unrestricted as the trade in corn.—*Ib.*

A. What it is to have a cunning enemy! Here are the manufacturers told, that they cannot expect to put down the great monopoly by which their general business is prevented from expanding cent per cent, without giving up the petty 5 per cent monopolies by which one of them here and there contrives to pick a little gain out of the loss of his fellows. "A Daniel!"

73. We do not wish to prevent the importation of corn; all we ask is to be enabled to compete with foreign growers, whose taxes and other burdens are infinitely lighter than our own; and, even under the present circumstances, they say, we only ask that importation shall be so far restricted as to give us the opportunity of obtaining such a return for our capital and industry as may be gained in other pursuits and avocations.—*Essex Herald.*

A. You only ask that other men may be prevented from enjoying the fruit of their industry when it is convenient to you. When it is not convenient to you, you have little or no objection. Every man that asks to have a return to his capital and industry at the expense of some other man's capital and industry, is of the same class with the man who vests his capital in a nag and a horse-pistol, and goes on the road to obtain "a return for his capital and industry." If he says he has to pay tax on horse and gunpowder, do not other men pay taxes too?

74. He was ready to concur in the general proposition of the noble Marquis, that the landed interest should have the benefit of a fair portion of whatever reduction in taxation the Government was enabled to make.—*Times*. House of Commons. 21st February 1834.

A. No share, is a fair share; as long as the landed interest is prohibiting trade by virtue of a monopoly of the House of Commons.

75. It was quite absurd and preposterous to suppose the existence of any distinct and opposing interest between the agricultural and commercial classes.—*Id.*

commercial classes, and no difference of interest, the men will not go long unshut-up, that are heard to say such things. Let the commercial classes have a duty on home-grown corn for nineteen or twenty years, and see how the agriculturists will take being told "it is quite absurd and preposterous to suppose the existence of any distinct and opposing interest." If there is no opposition of interest, why cannot the agriculturists be merry under the abolition of the Corn Laws?

A. If this meant (as it is not certain it did not) that any robbery committed by one class upon the other, will tell in the end against the robber class, as the agriculturists declare they are experiencing now,—it is a great truth. But if it meant that the agriculturists may rob the

76. Nothing can be more obvious than that in whatever degree the repeal of the Corn-law would reduce the price of corn, and, by necessary consequence, that of all other commodities, it would in just the same degree augment the burthen of the public debt, and elevate in the scale of society the Government annuitant.—*Morning Post*, 21st March 1834.

A. This is speaking out. The landlords borrowed money for their "just and necessary war," and the moment their war was over, they set about robbing the lenders. "The Government annuitant would be elevated if the Corn-law was removed,"—means in plain English, the Government annuitant was robbed when the Corn-law was imposed. Your landlord is your only Jacobin.

77.—A measure—which would certainly produce the effect—of altering essentially the relative position

A. They are talking of the last fraternity broken up by the New Police. That brotherhood pleaded, that there would be an essential

in society of Government or other annuitants and the proprietors of land, to the great detriment of the latter.—*Ib.*

alteration in the position in society of the owners of pocket-handkerchiefs and the takers, to the great detriment of the latter.

78. The proposition to repeal the Corn-laws, is in truth a proposition to give to the public annuitant, at the expense of the other classes of society, considerably more of the good things of the world than he now enjoys; and how this is to contribute to the national relief or prosperity we confess ourselves utterly at a loss to conceive.—*Ib.*

A. "The proposition to put a stop to street robbery, is in truth a proposition to give to the owner of pocket-handkerchiefs, at the expense of the other classes of society, considerably more of the good things of the world than he now enjoys; and how this is to contribute to the national relief or prosperity we confess ourselves utterly at a loss to conceive."

"We" does right to confess.

79. The more he thought upon the subject, the more he was convinced of the utter impracticability of having a free trade in corn.—*Ib.* House of Commons.

A. There is a lion in the way. Many another would give the same kind of opinion, if he was so lucky as to be asked.

80. Now, anybody conversant with the actual state of things would know that the only thing that had saved them [the agriculturists] from utter ruin, was the protection afforded them by the Corn-laws.—*Ib.*

A. If it is true that the agriculturists can only be saved from ruin by the robbery of their neighbours, why are they not swept from the face of the earth like other nuisances? It is clear that an earthquake which should swallow them up, or an arrangement of Providence which should turn them and their land into flag-stones, would be an immense

national blessing. If they can only live by other people's plunder, why are they to live at all, any more than any other set of public plunderers?

81. Then upon the heels of that came a dry season, which reduced the fields to a state almost equal to that

A. Would to God they had always kept so. It would have been a blessing to the country greater than the sinking of the West-India

90. The debt caused them [the landlords] to be in an artificial state which they could not get rid of.—*Ib.*

91. He considered the real question to be, whether the farmers should be protected or not? (*Hear, hear.*)—*Ib.*

92. — whether a large class of persons, whose capital had been sunk in a particular trade, or who had been brought up to a particular occupation, were to be compelled to apply themselves to another pursuit, and to have their capital destroyed?—*Ib.*

93. He would say that he greatly preferred that the bulk of the labouring population should be employed in agriculture, rather than manufactures, as the agriculturist had comforts and enjoyments which were wholly unknown to the manufacturer.—*Ib.*

94. The fact was incontestable, that low prices were of more advantage to the farmers, though less so to the landholder.—*Ib.*

A. Being "in an artificial state," always means being in a state of robbing other people. The highwayman is "in an artificial state," and one perhaps "he cannot get rid of," till other people find the way.

A. Certainly *not*; any more than the men the Old Bailey was made to put down. Read "the real question was, whether the farmers should be maintained in robbery or not,"—and some approach will be made to the truth. Protection always means robbery.

A. Exactly the same might be said of the receivers of stolen goods,—the *family men*, as the Police Reports call them. If a man's capital has been sunk in the prosecution of a robbery upon the public, none but the concerned will suppose that it makes any reason why the public should maintain him in the practice.

A. A special reason why manufacturers should be oppressed! Suppose some gentleman had a fancy for preferring manufacturers to agriculturists; would that be allowed to be a reason for laying a tax on home-grown corn to serve the manufacturers?

A. Another instance of bad reasoning in the mouth of a friend. It would be very useless to go about to tell a farmer, that he ought to grieve when corn rose, because he would have to pay higher wages; for he would answer immediately, that he should pay the shilling and pocket the crown. And the con-

verse in the other case. It is clear the opponents of the Corn Laws are some way from port yet. They must make a better luff than this, before they get in.

95. The great difficulty of all, however, was the immense pressure of the national debt.—*Ib.*

A. Might it not be as truly said, that the great difficulty of all, was the immense pressure of broad-wheeled waggons? Forty millions annually are to be raised for interest; and in this the knowing ones—*les habiles*—discover the necessity for prohibiting the commerce and industry of the country by Act of Parliament.

96. From the extent of her capital, the industry of her labourers, and the enterprise of her merchants, he was of opinion that if England was free from the presence of the national debt, she could compete in free trade with any nation in the world.—*Ib.*

A. Would it not be as reasonable to wait for cutting off all the little dogs' tails? Is there any more demonstrable connexion with one than with the other? England has a national debt; therefore let her prohibit commerce and industry, and confine herself to a limited quantity of corn. In what parish lives the man who has thrown the smallest light on the rationality of such an inference?

97. He did not claim protection for any particular class in the country; on the contrary, he had already admitted that every class was entitled to protection.—*Ib.*

A. In other words, he approves the plan of every man robbing every man and throwing half the spoil into the sea. This is the true nature of the system called "protecting all classes." It is remarkable, that not one of the Whig Government has ever had courage enough to state this point. It is too strong meat for them yet.

98. He represented a constituency who were large consumers of corn, but he told them that he could never bring himself to support a free trade in corn when he knew that the effect of that free trade would be to throw a great

A. What, in the imagination of the speaker, is the object of cultivating land? Is it to have corn; or is it something else? Now suppose the speaker had a field, from which by a certain expense he could raise a certain number of bushels of corn,—but by digging up the soil for bricks he

quantity of land out of cultivation.—*Ib.*

could make as much as would buy him annually twice as many bushels of corn, though the land should never be cultivated again. Where would be his scruples about "throwing a great quantity of land out of cultivation"? And is it not nonsense to talk about cultivation, which means having one bushel of corn instead of two?

99. From all these considerations he was led to believe that the merits of the case were neither on the one side nor on the other; and that the idea of a perfect free trade was a chimæra in the minds of some very well-read men, who were without any practical knowledge whatever on the subject.—*Ib.*

A. The ill-read men have so often run their heads against the well-read, with no result but proving their own incapacity for seeing a yard beyond their noses, that they might by this time have learned a little hesitation. "He has *read* about it; therefore trust to the man who has not." The "practical" man means in fact one who knows nothing, but that when he has fourpence he has got a groat.

Whether it may have been got by a loss of eightpence to himself or to his neighbours, is what he thanks heaven he knows nothing about.

100. It was impossible for a free trade to exist, unless the present burden of taxation was considerably lessened.—*Ib.*

A. It would be gratifying to considerable masses of the public, if some courteous ghost would blab out the shadow of a reason. Surely it is not meant to say, that if taxes were taken off the present objects, they must be laid in some other way. Can

that be what is in the head of the rich men?

101. The necessary consequence of any alteration in the present Corn-laws would be to throw out of cultivation a great portion of the land, and this would naturally lead to the destruction of the agricultural labourers.—*Ib.*

A. Does not the continuance of the present Corn Laws equally throw out of operation a great portion of manufacturing capital and industry, and thereby lead to the destruction of the manufacturing labourers? For what earthly reason that has ever been assigned, is the balance to be stayed upon the precise point of injustice?

102. He conceived that it was the first duty of a

A. The assertion here is, that it is the first duty of a protecting Govern-

protecting Government not to sacrifice one class of the community to the interests of another; and he felt convinced that the manufacturer, so far from benefiting by the reduced price of corn, would, on the contrary, be the sufferer, because the agricultural interest would be ruined by it.—*Ib.*

ment, to protect the robber that is uppermost. Give us fair play; set us upon a fair footing to begin with; and then preach on the duty of not sacrificing one class of the community to the interests of another. But do not first set the plunderer on our necks, and then harangue on the duty of not sacrificing his interests to ours.

The plea that the manufacturer would lose by not paying more to the agriculturist, is all resolvable into telling him that it is his interest to pay 3*l.* a quarter for corn instead of 2*l.*, in order that the agriculturist may buy from him with the 3*l.* three yards of broad cloth instead of two yards; in other words, have three yards for his quarter of corn instead of two. What uncommon skulls the manufacturers must be supposed to have!

103. Our importation could only be a few hundred thousand quarters per year more than at present. Was it at all likely that these nations would, for the sake of their several shares in this quantity, depart from the close and exclusive system which they had adopted and perfected for the protection of their own manufactures?—*Ib.*

A. Suppose they do not; what then? Has anybody asked to buy corn longer than it can be got? If foreigners stop it, so much the better for the "landed interest." We asked to trade where they *do not* stop it. Who would have thought, it was so easy a thing, to make old women of the manufacturers?

104. It is curious that this is not the doctrine of Mr. Hume and Mr. Poulett Thomson, who want the Corn-laws altered in order that the *wages of the manufacturing operatives may be lowered*; so that if I had voted for Mr. Hume's motion, I should have voted for the lowering the wages of the operative manufacturers of Glasgow and Paisley.—*Political Register*, 29th March 1834.

A. That is to say, if the doctrine stated is true. But if the author is not such a goose as to believe it,—and nobody supposes that he is,—why does he condescend to try to stop the mouths of the Glasgow men, with what he knows to be unfounded?

105. The petitioners of Glasgow want cheaper bread. They should then have petitioned for some law relative to the charges of *millers and bakers*; for the wheat is as cheap now as it was in the time of their grandfathers.—*Ib.*

106. How, then, would they get cheaper bread by repealing the Corn-laws? This is a matter from which these Corn-law gentry always fly off.—*Ib.*

107. Now, these Americans shall be tasters for us. We will take their last list of duties; and we will see whether they have a "*land-lord's tax*."—*Ib.*

we have; therefore a corn-tax in America may do comparatively as little harm as a tax on foreign *water* would do here. Laugh at the *garret*-bred, indeed! They cannot match the children of the turnip-fields.

108. — and if the beast who writes thus against me at Glasgow, were to hold such language, he being in America, he would be turned from with scorn, by every working-man in that country.—*Ib.*

109. He accuses me of reproaching the working people for their taste for reading and writing; and abuses my taste in preferring for their use *beer* and *bacon*, to books, or rather to newspapers.—*Ib.*

A. What have the grandfathers to do with it? We are not going to eat their bread over again. If wheat be forty shillings a quarter where it might be twenty, this has a right to make a difference in the price of bread, without looking at the millers and the bakers.

A. They must have uncommon skulls that do. A precious lawgiver, that cannot tell it would be by giving twenty shillings less for the bread a quarter of wheat is made into!

A. A man who should talk of making peach brandy in England because people may have it at New York, would not fall into half such a blunder, as supporting a corn-tax in England because there may be one in America. The Americans have not got to the end of their best land, as

A. If the Americans are block-heads, it is no reason why the men of Glasgow should be so too. But the true explanation is, that the Americans in general have not come to the point where the shoe pinches.

A. It is true enough. He toils in his vocation, to keep the people ignorant; and baits his traps with bacon and beer. A better and a wiser man would say to them,—Learn too much to be slaves, and then you will save your bacon.

110. "Crawford wished to abolish the Corn-laws and leave the debt entire; a proposition so absurd, that the more intelligent portion of the public considered they might as well have his opponent for their Representative." Yes; that was like the sensible people of Paisley.—*Ib.*

A. It is to be hoped the Paisley people feel the compliment. They think paying double for their corn, a better thing than paying their debts. But there is matter for meditation in this, out of Paisley. It shows what the supporters of the Corn Laws are aiming at. There must be some better hands to the wheel than at present, if mischief is to be prevented.

111. If these sixty thousand petitioners of Glasgow had petitioned for a repeal of the Malt-tax; or had petitioned against paying eight shillings a week to rear up a soldier's child for him; if—*Ib.*

A. If they had petitioned against anything but paying double for their corn, the landlords would have been glorious, and the Political Register content.

The people may have one comfort; which is, that the Corn Laws would have been removed by this time, if it had not been for the acts and efforts of their own leaders.

112. He would ask those advocates of the system, was it in free trade the prosperity of England was founded?—*Morning Post.* House of Commons. 22d March 1834.

A. Was it in throwing away one shilling in three, that the prosperity of England was founded? If England was strong enough to get over this, will any man confess to confounding it with her prosperity?

113. These were no doubt now-a-days considered as defective; yet England had risen to undoubted prosperity under them.—*Ib.*

A. Suppose a banker's clerk should say to his principals, "I have robbed you twice a-week, yet you have risen to undoubted prosperity under it." Would anybody mistake about that;—out of Parliament?

114. But the free trade theorists, in reference to the decaying state of the country since the restriction on commerce had been removed, would no doubt, say, "If it be not prosperous, it ought to be so;" and to

A. Suppose the banker's clerk should say, "I gave up the practice a twelvemonth come Christmas; and ever since, gentlemen, you have been in a decaying state." What would the answer be, but "Show us some proof; first, of the decay; secondly,

those who suffered by the changes, "Console yourselves for that reason."—*Ib.*

of its connexion with our ceasing to be robbed."

115. He had said that he did not consider the present Corn-laws a sufficient protection to the agriculturists. He had voted for them because he considered them the last bulwarks between the country and a social convulsion.—*Ib.*

A. Mrs. Partington's mop. It may be true enough, that a convulsion is at the door; and the iniquity that brought it on, with the imbecility that dallies with removing the cause, must be answerable for the consequences.

116. Now the removal of restriction on trade would have the effect of reducing wages incommensurately with the reduction of the price of corn; and consequently the poor man could not then purchase the same amount of bread at a proportionate price as he did before the restrictions were removed.—*Ib.*

A. Where do either the premises or the consequence come from? Might not the arguer, if it suited him, as well say the moon would tumble down? How is corn to be reduced in price, but by more of it being got in exchange for the labourer's work; and upon what principle is this to be accompanied with the labourer's getting less corn? The business of the sensible Liberals, is to treasure up these extreme follies, as the means of pulling down more of abuse than the immediately concerned.

117. For his part he would much rather have the quartern loaf 2s. while the labourer had 6s. per day, than six-pence when the labourer had not six-pence in his pocket wherewith to purchase it.—(*Hear, hear!*)—*Ib.*

A. It is possible he would; but as the Irishmen say when they see into a joke, "Paddy, come out of the cart!" How is the loaf to come down to 6d., without the labourer by whose labour it is purchased, having a larger loaf out of the produce than before? The warning held out to the operatives is, "Of all things take care there is not an increased demand for your

goods to exchange for corn; for if there is, you will come by less of it than before." It is the converse of the jest which says, "Give the landlords *six* shillings for a bushel of corn instead of three; and then they will buy *two* days' work of you with a bushel of corn instead of one."

118. As it appears, on indisputable authority, that

A. Waiving all dispute on the accuracy of the twenty per cent, what

the manufactures of England are already protected to the extent of very nearly twenty per cent beyond agricultural produce, what more can be asked for keeping good faith in view? — *Nimrod on the Corn-laws*. Age. 13th April 1834.

sense is there in first throwing an enormous sum into the sea by paying an extra price for corn, and then throwing another enormous sum after it, (twenty per cent greater, if Nimrod will have it so) by paying an extra price for manufactures; and ingeniously setting off one loss to mend the other loss? If Nimrod's horse was spavined on one side, "what more could be asked" to mend it, than having it spavined on the other?

119. —unless the rampart of the country, the agricultural community, is intended to be destroyed.—*Ib.*

it is not the rampart of the country.

A. The agricultural community is to be brought into the ways of honesty, like other people. It is to be brought to carry on its trade to the exact extent of what other people want to buy from it, and not an inch further. And till it does this, the country, but the leak and quag-

120. "But," said a friend to me the other day, "have you read Colonel Thompson's Catechism on the Corn-laws?" I replied, I had not; I thought it too cheap to be good. But I looked into it, and was very soon satisfied. Common sense will not allow me to listen to arguments in which questions of fact are not taken into consideration. Observe, for example, the answer given in page 60, to the following proposition in a Number of the *Quarterly Review*, article "Agriculture and Rent:"—

"If the Corn question could be disposed of (says the Reviewer) without regard to the wishes, or even the prejudices, of the class

A. Nimrod is simply too good for his work. He is one of God Almighty's aristocracy in a queer place; and cannot conceive people's being so chivalrously stupid, as those whose side he has undertaken to espouse. Nevertheless, it is true after all, that his friend the "Quarterly" was trying to persuade the public there would be danger of a famine. The direct fraud or blunder it was trying to push forward, was the confounding a diminution of the *English-grown* corn, with a diminution of all the corn there would be to eat; and the context is there to prove it. Nimrod cannot conceive such imbecility; but it is not the less there. If Nimrod can prove that the "Quarterly" was trying to impress, for example, that there would be danger of subser- viency to foreign countries,—then

engaged in agriculture, the result would be an alarming reduction in the quantity of grain annually grown in this country."—*See p. 442.*

To which the Colonel gives the following sage reply:—

"The quantity grown will not be diminished, unless prices fall; and prices will not fall, *unless the grain obtained, either by importation or otherwise, is increased.*"

Can any thing in logic surpass the absurdity of this answer? In God's name, what would be the object of a free trade in corn, but an increase of quantity?—*Ib.*

121. I should like to have witnessed the meeting between themselves and their bailiffs, on market evenings. It would have resembled this (to myself, well known) dialogue:—"Well, John, did you get 15*l.* a load—[*not* a saving price, observe, on the average of the last twenty years]—for the wheat?"—"Oh, no, Sir; the millers told us they could buy better foreign corn at 2*l.* per load less money."—*Ib.*

A. What they would have said (and they *have* said it all, and in print too) would have been, "You know, John, if people can get corn for 13*l.*, we cannot be such rogues as to wish to force them to give us 15*l.* You know it would be dishonest; and you are a class-leader, they tell me, among the Methodists. And all people, you know, John, whether Methodists or not, should keep within the rule of doing to others as they would be done to. Either you or I, John, would kick the shoemaker out of the house, who should tell us we ought to give him 10*s.* a pair for shoes when as good

were selling on the other side of the way for 7*s.* Besides, John, did you ever take your old master for a fool? Was not he always able to set a mouse-trap as well as another? Do you think he is such an ass as not to know, that if he could force the people, ay John, to give 15*l.* for corn instead of 13*l.*, it would all come round upon us in the poor-rates, and the impossibility of finding employment for our bairns? What is to be done with all your long-legged lads and mine, if we shut up the country on a given quantity of corn? No, no, John, we will have rent for all the land that will bring corn that people will honestly buy of us, but not a bushel more; so tell the tenants I shall reduce their rents, because we must all help to bear the scrape the numskulls of the landed interest have brought us into. But when the Corn-law is removed, John, you know I expect them within a twelvemonth to return to their old rents, or show the reason why. You and I, John, did not learn to

the writer of the Catechism was following the wrong fox.

snickle birds together *a' top o' th' Wauds*, to have salt put upon our tails in this manner in our old age."

122. Thus, Mr. Editor, experience is the great teacher after all. It neither reasons nor debates, but carries conviction and proof; and nothing but mental derangement can induce a man to combat its decisions.—*Ib.*

A. Nimrod *see-hos* his hare too soon. "The great teacher" happens to be all on the other side. Wait for a few more quarters' schooling of "the great teacher."

123. I will admit, for argument's sake, that open ports would not occasion the prices of British corn to fall, unless under peculiar circumstances. But in the case of a wet harvest in Britain (we had three wet ones out of four a few years back), and a dry one in Poland and other corn-growing countries, what would be the situation of the British farmer? It is almost needless to give the answer—his produce would be low in proportion to the expense at which he had produced it; and I suppose these legislating Colonels have *some* idea of the vast expenses attending a wet corn harvest.—*Ib.*

A. Nimrod need not trouble himself with open ports not causing the prices of British corn to fall, unless he likes. It was only a folly, on the part of men who put forward the wrong reason because they did not know how to advance the right. But, as he proposes, it shall be supposed to be done only to clear the argument.

The answer to the plea of wet harvests is, that the farmers and owners of land are bound to make their reckonings on an average of seasons, and carry their cultivation of land just so far and no farther. If they do not know how to do it, that is their business and not other people's. Suppose an underwriter was to make his calculations on all his ships coming home safe, and then was to run to the landed interest and say, "By the act of Providence and a windy season, two out of ten of my ships have foundered at sea. Remunerate me out of your rents." Just as good a joke, is the claim of the agriculturists to consideration for wet harvests.

It is not very plain what Nimrod means by a "dry harvest in Poland." Does he mean that there should be a bad harvest in Poland too? If so, this would only cause the prices of home-grown corn to rise; which in such circumstances would be nothing but what everybody would acknowledge to be right.

124. It is also needless to add, that in this case other

A. All these have been answered over and over, in other places; which

countries would be enriched as our own became poor; or that a low price of wheat, an old gold standard, and a heavy national debt, can never co-exist.—*Ib.*

need not hinder their being answered again, as unceremoniously as they are introduced. To call getting cheap corn instead of dear, "other countries being enriched as our own becomes poor," is simply nonsense. You might as well tell Tom the ostler, that giving him cheap ale instead of dear, was filling other people's stomachs as his own was emptied. To say that a low price of wheat, an old gold standard, and a heavy national debt, can never coexist,—is no wiser or better proved than to tell Tom, that because he has an old sovereign for his quarter's wages, and there is a tax on shoe-leather, he ought to pay double for his ale.

125. I contend that, in each nation, the amount of its money-wages is according to the extent of the produce of its soil, and its price upon the spot, after allowance made for the expenses of its Government, and for the annual interest of its debt—the gross sale proceeds of the produce of labour, after the amount of taxation has been taken from them—as compared with its population and the demand for labour.—*Mercator on the Corn-laws. Morning Herald. 25th April, 1884.*

126. What it is that gives the sale price for the produce of the soil can be better considered hereafter; and here it is only necessary for me to maintain, that the products of agriculture being bartered against the labour of producing them, or against the products of other labour, and the labourer's money-wages being

A. The amount of *substantial* wages (that is to say, reckoned in *things* and not in the money that buys them) depends on the quantity of food attainable, and the number among whom it is to be divided. The less the food and the greater the number of people, the less corn must the working classes accept for their day's work; for it is impossible, that by any labour, they can get the corn that is not there, or have the same shares out of a smaller quantity as out of a greater; nothing short of the miracle of the loaves and fishes could accomplish it. The object of the Corn conjurors is to establish that they can.

A. What the substantial wages may be when turned into money, depends simply on what may be the relative value possessed by what is used for money; and is (as far as regards the immediate question) of as little consequence to the working classes as whether they are paid in thick or thin sixpences. The working classes are always to bear in mind, that the object of the Corn conjurors,

the anticipated payment of his share of what he produces—it is the sale prices of the produce of the soil of any nation that gives the scale of value upon which that barter in it is made, and, therefore, the scale of its money-wages.—*Ib.*

127. — only two arguments have been fairly adduced for the repeal of the Corn-laws.

The first, the extension of our commerce, by exchanging our manufactures for the cheap corn of the North of Europe, that we might thereby be enabled more effectively to compete with other manufacturing nations in the general markets of the world; and the second, an act of justice to the labouring classes, by giving them as cheap food as other nations have.—*Ib.*

The justice contemplated for the labouring classes, was giving them as cheap food (that is to say, as much corn for their day's work) as they *might* have; and not robbing them of half to serve the landlords.

128. — though engaged for thirty years in commercial pursuits, and with my whole heart in them, yet I think that an undue importance has, of late years, been attached to our trade and manufactures; and, at any rate, that exaggerated statements have been made of the numbers employed in them, arising from the faulty way in which the census of 1821 was drawn out. The numbers of those di-

A. Neither of the arguments is fairly stated.

The object of "the extension of our commerce, by exchanging our manufactures for the cheap corn of the North of Europe," was no such thing as "that we might thereby be enabled more effectively to compete with other manufacturing nations in the general markets of the world;" it was the much nearer and more reasonable object, of giving the working classes more corn to eat, and consequently more pecks of corn for a day's work, or a peck for fewer hours. There is no driving into these men, that the use of corn is to have corn to eat.

The justice contemplated for the labouring classes, was giving them as cheap food (that is to say, as much corn for their day's work) as they *might* have; and not robbing them of half to serve the landlords.

A. Suppose the inhabitants of a walled town were to shut their gates and determine to eat no corn but what was grown in flower-pots on the tops of houses; being moved thereto by the anticipation, that the numbers engaged in trade and manufactures would at the end of twenty years be found to be only one-half of those that owned the flower-pots or were connected with them. Could heads be supposed capable of such folly? yet it is paralleled, point by point, by this argument of Mercator's.

rectly or indirectly engaged in trade and manufactures, apart from the trades connected with agriculture and dependent upon it, are much short of one-third of the population.—*Ib.*

129. This is as respects numbers, and now with regard to their interests.

— a total of 30 millions which I calculate is the extent of the per-centage profit that we derive from our trade, manufactures, and shipping. But Sir Henry Parnell has but lately estimated the national income at 300 millions a-year. I hold that, at the present prices of grain, he has over-rated the amount; and I calculate our yearly income at 250 millions. Still we have 220 millions as derived from the rent of dwellings, and from the gross produce of the soil.—*Ib.*

130. It cannot, therefore, be asserted, with any shadow even of truth, that the Corn-laws are a tax for the benefit of one part of the community, the landed proprietors, to the detriment of another part, the manufacturing interests; they, as will be shown afterwards, only, in part, tend to raise the general scale of value in the nation, and that scale operates justly and equally upon the interests of all alike.—*Ib.*

131. Cheapness is a relative term; and it is worse than nonsense, it is a delusion practised upon them, to say you will give the labouring classes cheap food, if thereby the scale of value in the nation be lowered, and the labourers' money-wages, of necessity, reduced also in the same proportion.—*Ib.*

A. Suppose the manufacturers in the walled town were told to look at the small quantity of their foreign trade (they being allowed to trade for anything but what they want, viz., corn); what man would be so stupid as to take this for an argument, why the flower-pot system should be continued?

A. Tell the people in the walled town, that there is not a shadow of truth in the shutting-up being for the benefit of the owners of the flower-pots, to the detriment of the manufacturers; because it raises the general scale of value within the walls, "and that scale operates justly and equally upon the interests of all alike." Who is there that does not see, that it is a cunningly-devised engine to oppress the working classes for the benefit of the men of flower-pots?

A. Tell the people in the walled town, that if they open their gates the scale of value in the town will be lowered, and the labourers' money-wages of necessity reduced also in the same proportion. Is there man or boy, that would not see the fraud?

132. But there is this distinction to be made; that our taxation being a fixed money charge, it is, therefore, a most important consideration to the working classes whether the 2*d.* or 3*d.* a-day that is taken from them in taxation, in the cost of their wants, be paid out of two shillings a-day, or only out of one shilling a-day's wages. In the latter case its pressure is doubled.—*Ib.*

133. The just and right consideration of the interests of the labouring classes is not whether they should or should not have cheap bread, but whether they do or do not receive in wages their due proportion of what they produce.—*Ib.*

134. At present there is only the evil operation of the Poor-laws that destroys the labourer's just right to sell his labour where he may chuse; otherwise the competition for the employment of capital limits the master's share, and the operatives get the rest, after payment of the raw material and for the use of his works.—*Ib.*

135. I have not read much on Political Economy, and therefore am totally at a loss to conjecture by what strange mode of reasoning it can be asserted, in opposition to the above conclusions, "that as you increase the price of agricultural produce, you depress the wages of manufacturing industry, and lower also the profits of capital."—*Ib.*

A. That the Government takes 2*d.* or 3*d.* a-day in taxes, will be no reason why the working classes should not be glad to have two pecks of corn where they have one now; for to this, in spite of all the efforts of the money-jugglers to conceal it, it will come.

A. It is no such thing. It is whether they get their peck of corn for as few hours' work, as they might if the owners of the flower-pots, who shut the gates, were tumbled over the walls into the ditch.

A. Tell the people within the walled town, that there is nothing but "the Poor-laws" that destroys the labourer's just right to sell his labour where he may chuse, and that the competition for the employment of capital limits the master's share. The fact being all the time, that they are shut up to serve the flower-pots.

A. Simply as it is done in the walled town. You increase the price of agricultural produce, by saying none shall be eaten but the growth of the flower-pots; and so you squeeze the manufacturers and capitalists against the necessity of bidding in opposition to each other for the artificially diminished quantity of corn.

136. For it must be clearly obvious that, in a manufacturing and agricultural country, like England, which does not export its grain, there can be no barter in it for the produce of its soil, but against the products of the manufacturer; nor can there be any sale for manufactures, or for the returns for them when exported, were there not produce of the soil sufficient to exchange against them; and hence the justness of the brief remark made by Adam Smith, "that according to the extent and produce of its agriculture will be the extent of the productive labour which is put in motion within the country."—*Ib.*

137. One of the charges against the Corn-laws most insisted upon at the present moment, is their tendency to cause great fluctuations in prices. In his after-dinner speech to his Manchester constituents, Mr. Poulett Thomson gravely stated his opinion, that their abolition would not lower, but only steady prices, as in other less or un-protected commodities. Col. Thompson, after reiterating the same fallacy, chose to select the article of coffee as an illustration happily in point.—*Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, for May 1834; Part II. p. 792. Article "The Corn Law Question."

138. The fluctuations of corn, therefore, for a period of eight years, averaged 20, and those of coffee 48½ per cent, or nearly 20 per

A. Quite true in the land of flower-pots. But no reason at all why the flower-pot system should be continued; nor did Adam Smith mean any thing so stupid. By agriculture he understood *having corn*; not the shutting out corn and growing it in flower-pots.

What is here meant by "sufficient"? What comes from the flower-pots is *made* to be sufficient. It means men's having as much as knaves will let them.

A. The last mentioned individual never reiterated any such gallimaufrey, as that the abolition of the Corn Laws "would not lower, but only steady prices;" on the contrary, he always resisted it, as a feeble attempt to catch the enemy by putting salt upon his tail. He never attacked the Corn Laws on the ground of their causing unsteady prices; on the contrary, he had said, and in print, that their tendency was to keep corn steady—at an unjust price. Yet if he was invited to answer the separate question, of what was the most likely way to keep corn, coffee, wine, or any other article at a steady price, he would undoubtedly say, Keep open as many markets as you can.

A. The ancient strategy, of answering the argument that was not advanced. He never urged that the fluctuations in the price of coffee or of wine, were either greater or less

went beyond the former; and this, be it remembered, in the one special article challenged for the comparison by the economists themselves.—*Ib.*

do the like with corn. There is what the logicians would call a *translatio elenchi*; which in the vulgar tongue is a “hustling of the question.”

139. The new doctrines have, we are aware, their proselytes among the trading classes; but we have good faith that their roots have struck neither wide nor deep. They are yet, in the main, confined to bodies professing, or approximating to, the peculiar tenets of religious belief or unbelief advocated by their leaders of the Utilitarian school, whose principles of political and trading economy may be briefly summed up in the rogue’s advice and blessing to his son—“Get money—honestly if you can—but if not, get money.”—*Ib.*

140. A notice of the imports and exports to the corn-producing countries, which, it is said, but for the Corn-laws, would consume so many countless millions of British manufactures, will simplify our labours for the present, and assist our researches for the future. [Here follow Tables stating that] in the space of seventeen years, whilst the exportations of manufactured and other native wares [to Prussia] have declined to one-seventh, the importations have tripled in amount. [That the returns with Russia show] a decrease of nearly one-eighth in the exportations, against an increase of about three-eighths in the importations. [And a phenomenon of like nature with the United States.]

141. The excess of imports over the whole of the

than in that of corn; but that, as none above the intellect of a child would go about to steady the price of coffee or of wine by any way but letting the merchants import them from all quarters, and allowing all to sell them who chose, so none would

A. Decent and graceful, from the horse-leeches and their daughters, whose only cry is “Give, give!” The most proper time to answer this, will be when the manufacturers have got to the end of their intended tax for twenty years on home-grown corn. The sure end of a man’s allowing himself to be habitually plundered, is to be called a rogue if he thinks of leaving off.

A. The old joke of trying to persuade people, that we get goods from foreigners for nothing, and that if we did, it would do us harm. A country shop-keeper who should take into his head that he was suffering from such a cause, would be sent to the County Hospital.

A. Their first movement thereanent, being to prohibit barter for the only

exports in our trade with Russia alone is estimated, on a fair allowance for the difference in the money over the official value, at three millions sterling, and that of our dealings with Prussia and the United States at probably two millions more—making a total of about five millions; so that here is an evil which has increased, is increasing, and ought to be counteracted. The Economists would, however, open the breach still wider; they would destroy the first and legitimate principle of all trade, which is barter, where the means of it exist.—*Ib.*

142. They would overflow us with millions' worth additional of foreign corn, which could and would only be paid for in money, but not in labour, until the fund drawn upon should be exhausted.—*Ib.*

143. If the foreign corn-grower thus close his door as we throw open our portals, and prohibit our wares in proportion as we enfranchise his produce, on what ground can the Economists rest their preposterous fallacy and magnificent promises to the manufacturers?—*Ib.*

144. We are told—and the tale has been the more often repeated, because the want of contradiction swells the presumption of ignorance—that our own trade restrictions and corn prohibitions were the origin, and are the justification, of the fiscal warfare against us.—*Ib.*

145. Another and a more monstrous fallacy of

thing we much want, and foreigners much want to part with. The opponent has stumbled unawares on a great truth, that "the legitimate principle of all trade, is barter." Everything beyond that, is the Currency trick.

A. The Currency trick, as foretold. As if money was not a merchandise as well as anything else, and only to be got by giving labour for it somewhere,—unless somebody can show where it is to be got without.

A. If the foreign corn-grower close his door to our wares, the consequence (except so far as there may arise a transit trade in foreign gold) must be to prevent his produce from coming within our portals. Against which, it is to be supposed the opponent would make no complaint.

A. It is a race of barbarism on both sides. Blockheads in Russia think as blockheads do here. But because the Russian government is barbarian and stupid, are we bound to be barbarian and stupid?

A. A facetious way of proving, that the shipping interest profits by

these philosophers represents the shipping interest as deeply concerned in the abrogation of the Corn-laws, and certain of most prosperous employment and most splendid gains thereby.

[Follows a Table stating that in 1820 British shipping entered inwards was about half as much more tonnage as Prussian, and in 1832 the proportions were nearly inverted.]—*Ib.*

146. We now approach &c.—the most solemn and the most perilous &c.—there is no blinking it, &c.—the manufacturer inoculated with the venom of the economic doctrine, who bawls for the abolition of the Corn-laws, really means neither more nor less than *a reduction of wages.*—*Ib.*

147. With half a million of rural population thrown upon the high-roads, the trading operatives are not slow to comprehend that no gradually descending scale in the reduction of the prices of labour is practicable; that the conclusion must be come to at one leap; and that if bread-stuff values are to be equalized with the current rates of Continental Europe, so also must the rate of wages be.—*Ib.*

148. But if the money rate of wages remain the same with a cheap as a taxed loaf, how is the manu-

the prohibition of foreign commerce, and would lose by its being removed!—if any man can be found to receive it.

A. The manufacturers have penetrated the height and depth of this turnip-lantern, set up for a hobgoblin by the agriculturists. They know that the result of the removal of the Corn Laws would be, that wages might fall from a shilling to ninepence, and the ninepence buy as much corn and everything else as fifteen-pence did before. And then Squire Wronghead sticks himself in the path, and cries "You manufacturing dunces, you would not think of taking the ninepence?"

A. The trading operatives are not slow to comprehend, that the throwing of half a million of rural population on the high-roads, may be modified to any extent by making the alteration gradual; that to propose to keep the whole country starving, to avoid the difficulty of a fragment of the population returning to honest callings, is folly; and that the assertion that if bread-stuff values are brought down, so must substantial wages in the same proportion, is an invention of the enemy to prove that men will eat as much out of a little as out of more.

A. The landed gentlemen had better, on this point, leave the merchant and manufacturer to take care of himself. It will be time enough

facturer and merchant benefited against the foreign competition, which is the gravamen of his charge against the Corn-laws? The imports of corn may be quintupled, but not for that will the corn countries buy his wares; if dear, they can buy cheaper at home; if cheap, ukases and tariffs of higher duties will restore the differential distance.—*Ib.*

149. The statements in the petition would lead any person to believe that foreign corn was the only foreign article taxed. Now the contrary was the fact; for foreign shoes, hats, and other articles of dress as essential in the country to the life and comforts of its inhabitants as food, were taxed. He deprecated the presentation of petitions of this nature upon the face of them stating a gross fallacy. — *Morning Post*, 3rd May, 1834. House of Lords.

150. He hoped that his noble friend would feel that it was neither just nor wise to mix up with a question of such importance as the present, appeals to popular prejudices and passions that could do no good.—*Ib.*

151. Further, as a barter between two individuals can only be made upon what they both consider equitable terms, it may be the barter of equal quantities of labour; or, when one has a super-

to interfere, when he comes to ask them to shut him up that he may not burn his fingers, Who believes that the money rate of wages *will* remain the same? And if foreign countries will not take his wares, how are the imports of corn to be quintupled?—The landed gentlemen are uncommon bird-catchers.

A. The fallacy is with the individual who thinks that two wrongs make a right. The petitioners state, that large quantities of the wealth of the community are destroyed and thrown away through the taxes on foreign corn. "Blockheads," says a noble lord, "not to remember that large quantities are thrown away through taxes on foreign shoes and hats, also!"

A. Exactly the same would be heard at the Police-offices, if the enemies of "popular prejudices" were strong enough.

A. Apply this to the case of the walled town, whose gates are shut in order to oblige the inhabitants to give high prices to the people that grow corn in flower-pots. The inhabitants give what they had rather give than go without. But it does not the less

abundance, it may be the barter of double the quantity of labour against half the quantity, united by skill, with comfort and convenience, which is a matter of taste ; so in sound reason, we are denied the privilege of supposing that one large body of the people can have any undue advantage in the barter of the produce of their labour against that of another mass of men in the same nation.—*Mercator on the Corn-laws Morning Herald*, 25th April, 1834.

152. But there is one great distinction to be made between manufactures and agriculture, and in that lies much of the merits of the question at issue. It is that, with a given quantity of raw material, a manufacturer can only obtain one certain produce But, according to the increased quantity of labour and capital bestowed upon our soil, all-bountiful Nature affords not only an improved quality, but also an increased quantity beyond the payment of labour and capital expended—the landlord's rent.—*Ib.*

153. We may, as many of us do, lightly think of, and misuse, the blessings which Providence has cast in our path. We may, as the economists would persuade us, give up the most productive manufacture, if I may so call it, which we have, that gives us a surplus beyond all the capital and labour expended upon it.—*Ib.*

154. We may go and sell our other manufactures in the Baltic, and get in corn, for a time, their full value, and perhaps more ; and, turning our agricultural labourers into one great workhouse, we may lavish our rents upon Russia, Poland, and Prussia. But in doing so we shall be brought, in

follow, that the whole is a cruel and stupid fraud.

A. The blunder of the French *économistes* ; consisting in not knowing that all that is given to one man through the intervention of rent, is taken from another. Rent therefore that is raised by prohibitions, is of the same quality as the rent levied by a highwayman upon his beat.

A. A pious hoax to represent highway robbery as a "productive manufacture, that gives a surplus beyond all the capital and labour expended upon it." Is not all that is gained by the plunderer, taken from somebody else ?

A. See how this would read if applied to the walled town. "We may go and sell our manufactures beyond the walls, and turning our fillers of flower-pots into the workhouse, lavish our rents on the people outside. But we shall soon be brought, in bitterness of heart, to acknowledge ourselves graceless spendthrifts."—*Mercator* is of the cunning ones.

bitterness of heart, at last to know that we have acted the part of the graceless spendthrift.—*Ib.*

155. At present we see one great and united operation—a population increasing with extended manufactures, and giving an excitement to the increased cultivation of the soil, which again affords a barter against the augmented products of the manufacturer—each acting as a stimulus to the other, and all adding to the general comfort and convenience.—*Ib.*

156. There is, whether at high or at low prices, the same barter of their different products.—*Ib.*

times as much work out of the manufacturers for a peck of wheat, as they would if the gates were open.

157. If the agriculturist gets a higher price for food, the manufacturer obtains therefrom a better sale for his products, and the operatives higher wages; no one is benefited at the expense of another.—*Ib.*

158. If the scale of value in the nation be raised by a higher price of grain, the landlord's scale of expenditure is raised also; he is no better off, except in the increased productiveness of his land giving him a higher

A. Try it by the flower-pots. "At present we see one united operation in all parts of our happy town. Population increasing with extended manufactures, and exciting the owners of flower-pots to double and treble their efforts at growing corn, which again affords a barter against the augmented products of the manufacturer; the manufacturer stimulating the flower-pots, and the flower-pots the manufacturer."—What happiness! and all the result of shutting the gates against other corn.

A. That is to say, the manufacturers get all the flower-pots can grow, and the owners of the flower-pots get all the manufacturers can make; the upshot being, that the men of flower-pots get two or three

A. Try it by the flower-pots. "If the owner of the flower-pots gets a higher price for the corn he grows in them, the manufacturer obtains therefrom a better sale for his products, and the operatives higher wages." That is to say, he gets the corn grown in the flower-pots, by working for the owner of the flower-pots two hours instead of one.

A. Try it by the flower-pots. "If the scale of value in the walled town be raised by a higher price of grain, the owner of the flower-pots must increase his expenditure also. He is no better off, except in his flower-pots giving him a higher rent; but

rent upon the renewal of a lease to the farmer; but which is no detriment to the manufacturing interests, unless the landlords should not, as at present they do not, pay their ample share of the national burdens, which were incurred for preserving the quiet possession of these rents.—*Ib.*

which is no detriment to the manufacturing interests, so long as the landlords pay their fair share of the expenses of keeping the gates shut and watched.”—Where is the community in existence, that would bear to be insulted by such a proposition?

159. According to them [the defenders of the existing system in France] the principle and motives of this system were commercial liberty, modified by reasonable preferences in favour of native produce.—*Report presented by M. Meynard to the Chamber of Deputies. Standard, 8th May, 1834.*

A. Liberty, modified by such restrictions as anybody can discover a private reason for imposing.

160. They [the other side] consider the system of protection, by means of moderate or wisely-poised protecting duties, to be a vain theory. For, in their opinion, a tax is a protector, but [only] when it is sufficiently high to prevent foreign concurrence, by making the price equal at the places where the article is to be consumed; this system is in reality a prohibition, for if otherwise, it does not protect. It is consequently absolute in every case of application. Now, the prohibitive system is a privilege granted to certain classes of industry; it is injurious to the natural development of those which are not protected, injurious to the interests of consumers, injurious to those paying taxes, by depriving

A. The words “moderate or wisely-poised” let out the inward leaning of the judges. And accordingly, they are found giving a very maimed account of the argument they are professing to describe. The real pith of that argument is, that every Frenchman who is forced to give *three* francs to a French ironmaster, for the iron he might have obtained through the intervention of the merchant of Bordeaux for *two*, is robbed of a franc without any countervailing advantage in the aggregate to France, as much as if the law said to him “Throw that franc into the sea” and he must throw it. And this because the three francs given to the trade of the maker of iron, are balanced *over and besides the loss to the consumer*, by two francs taken from the trade of the merchant of Bordeaux and the makers of the French goods he would export, and one franc taken from the trade of those other French dealers or manu-

the exchequer of its faculty of taxing, injurious to those protected, reduced to the smallest profits by the concurrence of home producers, under a condition of proportionately elevated prices which exclude them from

all foreign markets; so that in every country industries have prospered in inverse proportion of the effective protection of the tariffs, and in direct proportion of the liberty they have enjoyed.—*Ib.*

161. In presence of these two contrary opinions, the majority of your Commission has thought that, in a matter of tariff, nothing should be absolute; that in order to obtain a just ponderation of every interest, it ought to consult the situation of every industry and the state of agriculture; that it ought to conciliate as much as possible the divers exigencies, in order to insure a common prosperity, and to prepare further improvement to all, by leaving concurrence to act as a stimulus.—*Ib.*

162. Thus, then, the aim of its constant efforts has been to free our legislation from useless or exorbitant rigours, to satisfy general interests according to time, and to wants and facts, to pave the way for progressive liberty, but with the careful and prudent attentions which ought to be employed even in the most useful improvements. You will have to consider its result.—*Ib.*

facturers, with whom the plundered consumer of iron would have expended his franc if he had been let alone.—This is much too sore matter for the Committee to state distinctly.

A. The majority of the Commission will do anything but tangibly lay down the principle, that all protection is robbing one trade to serve another, with a loss to the consumers, who are the nation, besides; and that the only question is of annihilating the system without too sudden shocks. Their object is to say this and not to say it; to say it in such a manner that they can appeal to it upon necessity, but that it shall be as unintelligible as possible to anybody likely to make use of it to hurry the process. They are cunning monopolists,—(for the Chamber of the 200,000 is in fact the Chamber of the monopolists),—aiming at the maximum of what they think the state of public illumination will enable them to effect.

A. The point to be concealed being, that *all* restrictions are “useless and exorbitant rigours,” except so far as excused by the necessity of making the change gradual. The “progressive liberty” of the Commission, is the “progressive liberty” the English slave-holders were so much attached to, and means keeping things as nearly as possible as they are. The state of France is more hopeful than people had an idea of; the monopolists are manifestly driven into the same corner where the English West-Indians were two years ago.

163. Agriculture, that source of the security of states, could not do otherwise than excite the solicitude of your Commission; its interests, with which the preceding governments do not appear to us to have been excessively occupied, deserved its strictest attention.—*Ib.*

A. A sop for the vine-growers and the people of Bordeaux. This is what they have got by making a noise; so true is the saying of Bentham, that "by nothing but making the ruling few uneasy, will the oppressed many ever obtain a particle of relief." And the object will be, to try to tempt them by the offer of some kind of monopoly in turn; as if *two* national losses would make a gain.

And this leads to an observation, which is not without importance; and that is, that two apparently clashing monopolies, may both of them gain. They are both of them pumps, to draw up the water from the general soil for private use. They may be rivals, and all that one gets may be so much taken from the other; but they may both of them drain the public, for all that.

164. If your Commission have not thought fit to devote itself to the examination and application of a special system, and so decide between the economical school and the administrative traditions [precedents], it has nevertheless unanimously rejected the system called illimited liberty, the sudden adoption of which would cause trouble in the commercial domains, would disturb the actual order and violate public faith.—*Ib.*

A. An attempt, *à la Créole*, to preserve the slavery, by mixing it up with immediate unlimited emancipation. If not, the Commission would not have said that they "unanimously rejected the system called illimited liberty,"—but that they "rejected the sudden adoption of illimited liberty." Their object was to confound the question of unlimited liberty, with the question of its being introduced all at once and without gradations.

165. No one has ever denied cheapness to be an advantage; but it would be attained more safely, more usefully, by the concurrence of national labour, than by an unseasonable rivalry of foreign labour.—*Ib.*

A. Here the Commission let out the cloven foot. They recommend the French public to believe, that it is advisable to go on paying unnecessary prices with a national loss, in hopes that at some undefined and undefinable time the French monopolist will offer the article as cheaply as the French free trader. Their argument is of the same calibre as if

they said to the owner of land, "Do not lay out your capital on

the portion of your land you know will pay; but lay it out on the portion you know will not, in hopes that it *will* do by-and-by." This is what M. Thiers would call making *a conquest* of the land.

166. Your Commission preferring the light of experience to the arguments of theory, has devoted its time to the investigation of facts; and convinced that there can be no general maxim applicable to the numerous interests embraced by a customs' system, has called before it the different branches of industry; it has studied their situation, in order to fix the degree of protection that should be granted to them; and, in fixing each of the articles of the tariff, it has diminished or augmented them, *according as that fixation seemed necessary and profitable to the interest which they regulate.*—*Ib.*

167. Consequently, the basis of the decisions of the Commission has been the known utility of the object, and a comparison with the sum paid as a smuggling insurance.—*Ib.*

combined with a due and discreet reference to the check arising from the smuggler.

The understanding of the misery of this basis, depends upon a clear comprehension of the way in which the gain to the

A. The meaning of the Commission is this. "That the monopolists gain," they say, "we will call *experience*. That other people lose the difference of price twice over, we will call *theory*. And then we will say that your Commission prefers the light of experience to the arguments of theory." The truth being all the time, that the fact of other people losing the difference twice over, is just as much matter of experience as the other, if the Commission will only take the experience of the proper persons.

The Commission, however, think they have settled the point to all eternity; and they proceed without hesitation to avow, that in fixing the articles of the tariff, they pay not the slightest attention to the fact that France is the loser by each and every act of robbery, but confine themselves entirely to the question whether the several robbers declare their respective robberies to be "profitable" to themselves.

A. That is to say, the basis of the decisions of the Commission has been the magnitude of the sum gained to the monopolists and lost twice over by the rest of France,—(viz. once by a corresponding diminution of business to some other French traders, and once more by the loss to the consumers, who are the nation),—com-

monopolist is lost twice over by other parties; or what in England has been called the *double incidence* of the loss. If the loss only fell once, or to its simple amount, there would be a balance, and all that was lost through the foolery would be the expense of maintaining custom-houses. But it is because the loss falls twice over, that the law literally says to the unhappy Frenchman, (to parody the Parisian's description of the *Veto*), "Throw that franc into the sea; and thou must throw it."

168. Such a state of things is highly detrimental to morality; it excites, it encourages, disobedience to the laws; it is ruinous to regular trade, it is a burden on those paying taxes, and without any advantage to the trader, who degrades himself by employing it.—*ib.*

A. Oddly enough, this is not a description of the system of throwing the third franc into the sea, but of *smuggling*. Nations will probably continue to be obliged to throw away the third franc, till they come to a united opinion, on what has been openly avowed in England,—that "the smuggler is God Almighty's knight-errant, in defence of honest people against knaves and block-heads."

169. The above, gentlemen, are the principles which have directed the Commission in its labours. You will judge whether it has properly performed the task you confided to it.—*ib.*

A. The principles are, that any French trader shall be allowed to injure other French traders and the nation to double the amount of his own gain, to any extent he may declare he finds convenient and the smuggler will allow. And for this boon, the 200,000 electors are to return a Chamber that will adhere to the existing order of things.

It is very probable, that the Commission "has properly performed the task confided to it."

170. [Cotton twist. Chamber of Deputies.] The first and the most important measure proposed by government in the project it laid before you on the 3rd of last February was relative to taking off the prohibition existing on raw spun

A. "Don't show your Georgian ignorance!" Think of the darkness of a country, where a blunder or a fraud like this can be gravely brought forward, and none gainsay it.

The jobbers of the Chamber of Deputies say Frenchmen shall pay 30 per cent more for cotton twist than

cottons of No. 143 (metrical system) and upwards, on paying a duty of 8 francs [6s. 10d.] per kilogramme [2 lbs.] on plain cotton thread, and 10 francs on twisted ditto. In 1833 government made, and your Commission adopted, that proposition; nevertheless the duty, instead of being fixed at a certain sum, was fixed at 30 per cent on the value of the object.

After the inquiries made relative to the manufacturing of cotton, and the publicity they have received; after the discussions of the councils of manufacturers, and of trade, and the *exposés* produced at this tribune, it would be impossible to present to the Chamber any new consideration or unknown details; your Commission has not thought fit to enter into any extra-parliamentary investigation: as the facts are evident, it will merely retrace them.

This branch of industry, which in France commenced with the century, has taken an extension which has far surpassed the most buoyant hopes; the manufacturing of cotton into thread or stuffs amounts to 600 millions [of francs]; the raw material which is wholly [on the whole] received from abroad does not enter into that sum for more than 60 millions; it employs more than 600,000 individuals, and we export from 55 to 58 millions; the remainder is consumed at home.

Thus, as the value of the exported merchandise is equal to that of the raw material, there remains in France a capital of 500 millions [of francs] (which this branch of industry produces by its labours), which is annually consumed and reproduced to satisfy the wants or the comforts of the population, and consequently gives an immense element of labour

the merchants of Bordeaux could procure it for in exchange for the products of the South; and then put forward the gainfulness of the proceeding.

What they take care to omit is, that all the extra price (30 per cent) given to the French makers of cotton twist, would be just as much expended on the encouragement of French industry of some kind, if the cotton twist was allowed to be procured by the merchants of Bordeaux in exchange for the products of the South; and that its being so expended would cause just as much encouragement to French capital and industry in the aggregate as it can do in the other way, only it would not go into the pockets of the jobbers in cotton twist in the Chambers. The final result by the present mode consequently being, that the consumers of cotton twist in France pay 30 per cent to pure loss, or for no existing end but that a jobber in cotton twist may get a certain sum dishonestly instead of a Bordeaux merchant or vine-grower honestly. In other words, that France may be pillaged to the amount of 30 per cent on cotton twist.

A nation is not in the van of civilization, which has a government in which jobs like this can be put forward unexposed.

to the working class.—*Report of the Commission charged to examine the Project of the Customs Law, presented by M. Meynard to the Chamber of Deputies.*—Standard, 8th May 1834.

171. But the improvement in spinning has not been able to keep up with that in weaving; the difficulties to be overcome were not equal in the two branches; the productions of the one have not been able to supply the necessities of the other, and it has been found necessary to have recourse to foreigners to procure the raw material demanded by our weavers, and which could not be derived from our native produce.—*Ib.*

Would he not instantly find out, that he had much better get the lace for 30 per cent less, and with the difference pay his servants for producing something else, and have *that too*? All the difference between the two cases, is mystification or blunder.

172. Nevertheless, French spinning has not remained stationary; under the shelter of protection it has increased its looms, improved its systems, introduced new machines at great expense; and it is certain, that while Belgium, Switzerland, and Saxony, have not been able to reach higher than the Nos. 110 and 120 English, it furnishes our weavers to their entire satisfaction, all the numbers up to 170 in the same system.—*Ib.*

A. The project, then, put forward is this. "We will buy from foreigners what we cannot make at all; but if we can make the thing at all by any augmentation of price, we will not buy it." For if the advantage of not buying it holds good in one instance of increased price, it will in another.

Inquire now, what individual, or what master of a family, would ever entertain such a project. Was ever Frenchman found to say, "My wife's lace shall be made at home, at 30 per cent more than it could be had for from England or Brussels; and my reason is, because it will give so much employment to my capital, and such beautiful wages to my servants."

A. That is to say, it furnishes them at a loss to France of 30 per cent. The weaver says the thread is equal to the English; but France has been robbed of 30 per cent upon the price, in order that a profit might go to the jobber in the Chamber of Deputies instead of the vine-grower of the South. This is one of M. Thiers's conquests.

Fancy now the master of a family exulting and saying, "My servants can make me No. 170 thread as good as English, and only for 30 per cent more." Would not he find his way to Charenton? M. Thiers, however, walks abroad.

173. It is consequently for the higher numbers that the struggle is open; the net-manufacturers employ from 180,000 to 200,000 kilogrammes; the proportion in which the French production enters into this consumption is contested by the parties interested; one party pretending that it furnishes three quarters of the whole: the other that it barely furnishes one-eighth. However this may be, it is by smuggling that the deficiency is supplied.

We must here state, gentlemen, that this smuggling is acknowledged, is even tolerated. Would it, in fact, be prudent to oppose it rigorously, merely to protect spinning? Would it be right to deprive a rich branch of trade of its raw material, and condemn it to perish merely to observe a principle strictly?—*Ib.*

174. The net or *tulle* trade has taken an extension it had no reason to expect when it was established. In 1827 it barely occupied 200 looms; there are at present above 1500 in our manufacturing towns. Calais, Lisle, St. Quentin, proudly display their tissues, which have nothing to dread from a comparison with the English; and notwithstanding the inconveniences to which it has always been exposed, it has been able to form an establishment, pursue its course, and bring to our markets a value which it acknowledges to amount to from 13 to 14 millions of francs.—*Ib.*

175. The manufactories of Tarare and in Alsace, as well as those of Calais, Lille, and Roubaix, notwithstanding the difficulty of their obtaining supplies, notwithstanding the concurrence caused by the fraudulent importation of the same

A. See if these men are fit to keep a village shop. But it is not ignorance, it is worse. A duty is to be laid on a foreign commodity for the benefit of French commerce. And then smuggling is to be tolerated, because French commerce cannot do without it. It might have occurred to some people, to take off the duty and go without the smuggling. But the true meaning of the jobbers is, to get all they can, and give up only what the smuggler will not let them.

A. This is all absurdity or fraud, if goods of the same quality might have been had by Frenchmen for *ten* millions of francs through the vine-growers of the South, and Frenchmen have had the three or four millions of francs which are the difference, to expend upon some other products of French industry.

A. These statesmen seem unable to make up their minds, whether their prohibition is a good or not. Sometimes they declare it to be a good; sometimes they declare its removal to be a good. What a pity, that at this time of day, the government of the finest country in Europe should

goods from abroad, have yearly improved, and their improvement will further increase by the prohibition being taken off.—*Ib.*

have got no further than the government of 200,000 jobbers.

176. If the protection which has constantly surrounded these branches of trade has carried them to this degree of prosperity, we cannot deny that the same power has served spinning with some utility.—*Ib.*

A. Not a word of this “prosperity” having been paid for, and being paid for to this day, by giving a higher price than necessary for the commodity, and robbing Frenchmen of the difference. Paying unnecessary prices and robbing France of the difference, — is the “prosperity” conquered by M. Thiers.

177. — but when prohibition shall have disappeared, when the weavers shall possess the certainty of obtaining at all times, though at a higher price, the article required for their manufacture, the native threads will run the risk of being forsaken, if their producers do not rapidly increase the improvement which there is reason to expect from their intelligence, and which is commanded by their interest.—*Ib.*

A. Did it never occur to anybody, that the mode here allowed to appear as a sort of episode, was the true mode of encouraging industry everywhere; and that the way for an honestly-governed country to make the most of its resources, is to give the various industries this kind of encouragement and no other? If an industry can grow up under a state of freedom, it is a blessing and a gain. If it can only grow up by dint of robbing other industries and the consumer besides, it is a curse and a misery. It might be supposed that a man who could be taught to set a mousetrap, might be convinced of this.

178. In presence of these contrary exigencies, is the moment come when the legislation can conciliate the interests of the two branches, without sacrificing either?—*Ib.*

A. Not a word of the exigency of preventing the aggregate of Frenchmen from being robbed. Two interests, either of them probably well enough disposed to gain by robbing the public, are set off against one another; and the question is gravely opened of whether their interests can

be conciliated, without a thought upon the robbery of the country and the public which is to be at the bottom of the whole.

Truly the French public is, on some points, half a century

behind. Perhaps the moment of the elections will be a time when some of these questions may show signs of life.

179. Spun wool in twist. —This wool is specially employed in the making of wool for the weaver; it is doubtless in the intention of providing the tissue-manufacturers at a cheaper rate with a material considered as a working instrument, that government has proposed its entrance; your Commission has not thought fit to sanction this proposition; spun wools are not admitted at our frontiers; . . . &c. There are, besides, two manufactories in France, which card, spin, twist long wools, and manufacture twist for *lisse*. These establishments would be ruined if the disparity we have just mentioned were to be granted. Your Commission proposes the continuance of the present system.—*Report of the Commission charged to examine the Project of the Customs Law, presented by M. Meynard to the Chamber of Deputies.* Standard, 9th May 1834.

180. Silk Handkerchiefs, or *Foulards*.—It is not without hesitation that your Commission has approved the entrance of foulards of all origin. The low price of the raw material and of labour in India will always be a dangerous rivalry for our manufactures, and the minority was of opinion that the introduction of Chinese foulards would be injurious to the production of similar objects in France; unfortunately the introduction takes place through smuggling, with a facility derived from the nature of the object.—*Id.*

181. Several petitions from the persons interested manifested the desire that the duty of 10 per cent on silver watches, and on the movements of all kinds not in cases, be raised to 15 per

A. Here is the theory of the jobbers of the Chamber of Deputies. As long as one of them can make any thing by dint of forcing the people to pay for it, he is to do it, and the unfortunate French people are to count it all kindness. The *twist* thieves on one side of the water; and the *corn* thieves on the other.

A. Why do men go to India or China at all, if it is not to get there what they cannot get so cheap at home, and spend the difference on something else? In fact, what but this, is the object of all trade? But jobbers all over the earth maintain, that it is only to be allowed when the jobbers at home cannot contrive, by any magnitude of robbery, to produce anything like the same thing themselves.

A. Not a word of the "persons interested" in the using of silver watches. It is astonishing how in all countries, the producers by dint of banding themselves together, have made the consumers submit to rob-

cent. Your Commission has not judged it expedient to grant this protection, fearing lest it should be an inducement to smuggling.—*Ib.*

bery with no limit but what is possible.

182. Since 1829 the existence of the saltpetre trade has been put into doubt by our customs laws. Protected till then by a considerable duty, every year since, its guarantees have been diminished; it has in vain called to its aid the interest of the defence of the state, of which it is the principal element, and of the Treasury which receives half a million from its duties. It has vainly invoked public faith, and the promises which it states in its memoirs to have received from the preceding governments; it has failed, owing to powerful considerations, which are the dearness of its productions, being more than double the price of foreign saltpetre, the solicitations from the industrial arts in which saltpetre is a basis, the necessities of navigation and of our India trade, and in short the still excessive amount of the duty.—*Ib.*

A. If the Institute had proposed a prize for folly, could it have been more successfully demanded than for this? The "principal element of the defence of the state," is having saltpetre "at more than double the price of foreign saltpetre." Frenchmen must buy the *dear* saltpetre to help the dishonest saltpetre makers, and they must buy the *cheap* saltpetre to help the India trade and navigation. These are the absurdities put off upon them by the shop-keeping aristocracy of the 200,000.

183. The employment of nitrate of soda, which has been imported from Chili within the last few years, has added its terrible competition to that of Indian saltpetre.—*Ib.*

A. In other words, French honest enterprise has found the means of procuring nitrate of soda advantageously from Chili. And this, the *bourgeois* robbers of the Chamber of Deputies call "terrible competition."

184. Your Commission approves the fixation of the tariffs relative to the nitrates of potash and soda at 35 francs. But it is of opinion that, in adopting from 1836 the reduction proposed by government, it would occasion the destruction of this branch of trade; it in con-

A. In other words, it thinks there would be an end to the dishonest trade, and honest trade would begin, while Frenchmen gained the difference. And therefore the duties must be kept at 15 francs.

It does not appear, that with the exception perhaps of Fonfrède of Bordeaux, there is a public man in

sequence thinks, that at the above-mentioned epoch the duties ought not to be reduced below 15 francs.—*Id.*

185. Cattle. — In the years 1816, 1819, and 1820, the average importation amounted to 16,000 oxen, 20,000 cows, and 160,000 sheep. The duties at that time were 3 francs per ox, 1 franc per cow, and 25 centimes, or a quarter of a franc, per sheep; this was a produce for the Treasury without any protecting view.

In 1821, and under the same tariff, the importation amounted to 27,000 oxen, 23,000 cows, and 246,000 sheep. Out of this number, 3000 oxen, and more than 100,000 sheep, come and dispute with the French grazer the markets of Sceaux and Poissy, *i. e.* the consumption of the capital.

A shout of distress proceeded from thirty departments; government hastened to propose raising the duties to 30f., 15f., and 2f.; the Chambers, by the law of the 27th of July 1822, raised them to 50f., 25f., and 5f.—*Id.*

186. He began by assuring the House that it was not his wish to occupy by any motion of a speculative character that time which he fully admitted ought to be devoted as much as possible to practical measures. —*Times*, June 6, 1834. House of Commons. RECIPROCITY DUTIES.

France who sees into the profound knavery and absurdity of this.

A. In other words, it was discovered that Frenchmen were getting cheap food, and the government hastened to apply a remedy. It hastened to decree, that 50 francs per ox should be taken from those other French *industriels* on whom it would have been expended if things had been left to themselves; and that the consumers, who are France, should lose the amount besides, in the same way as if it had been thrown into the sea. This is what nations, in these days, keep governments for*.

A. This kind of exordium always means, that the disputant has a truth to keep back under the title of "speculative," and a fallacy to bring forward under the title of "practical." It means that he is going to pray attention to the fact that a certain robbery gives sixpence to a dishonest trade, and pray that eyes may be shut to the fact that it takes *two* sixpences from honest people, of which it throws one into the sea.

* These examinations of the proceedings of the French authorities, led to the publication in the same year, of the "*Contre-Enquête, par l'Homme aux Quarante Ecus; contenant un Examen des Argumens et des Principes mis en avant dans l'Enquête Commerciale.* Paris: Delaunay. Décembre, 1834.—The whole pamphlet, with a translation, is in the *Westminster Review* No. 43 for Jan. 1835. In § 23 of the translation, there is a misprint consisting in printing "cost" for "last."

187. The direct tendency of those acts was to discourage British shipping, and to injure the various classes connected with British shipping to such an extent, that to delay further the proposal for the repeal of the Act would be a direct abnegation of duty.—*Ib.*

A. The "Reciprocity Act" complained of, gave the government the power of admitting the cheaper foreign vessel, in certain trades and on certain conditions. In other words, it allowed, in certain circumstances, the British consumers, who are the public, to receive a certain article for six-pennyworth of British goods given to a foreign vessel, and expend another sixpence on some British trader or dealer for their own advantage, instead of giving two sixpences to the British ship-owner, making the same sum expended on British traders, but with the agreeable accompaniment of causing a loss of sixpence to the consumer. The confining this process to cases where foreigners would concede what was called "Reciprocity,"—that is to say, would bestow the further benefit of taking off their own unjust and foolish imposts on British goods,—depended on a blunder, a fraud, a mere effort to prolong the pillage of the public; but it was as much as in the existing state of public ignorance the government could carry, and therefore it was in the right to carry it.

The dishonest and ignorant part of the ship-owners hold on by as much of the fraud as they can, and play into the hands of all the other pillagers of the public by way of preserving their own share. The honest and intelligent part of the ship-owners know, that if *all* the frauds on the public were removed, the impulse given to the trades in which the British ship-owner would continue to hold his ground, would be vastly more valuable than anything he might give up in the quarters where foreigners could compete with him. As it is, the "*interests*" as they call themselves, with the landlords who are the only gainers at their head, are combining to keep down British commerce to a fraction of what it might be, each hoping their portion of the plunder may be greater than their portion of the loss.

188. Now he held in his hand a list of articles of essential importance in ship-building, all of which were liable to heavy duties upon importation into this country. First of all, the ship itself was wholly prohibited—it must not be imported at all. Then there was a duty

A. When a man will not complain of the frauds by which he loses, what right has he to build on it a claim to preserve the fraud by which he gains? And what is it altogether, but a *plica polonica* of interwoven frauds?

In the words of the Abbé DE LA MÈNNAIS, "the right hand puts shackles on the left, and the left hand

of 20 per cent on iron, 30 per cent on copper, 50 per cent on casks, 30 per cent on sailcloth, 2*l.* 15*s.* per load on oak timber, and so on; live cattle were taxed, grain was prohibited at a low price and protected at a high one, fruit and vegetables paid a duty varying from 40 to 50 per cent, and in one word, all the articles required by the ship-owner to build and provision his vessels paid some duty or another. He did not complain of the imposition of those duties, far from it; their imposition was founded on a wise policy, but they increased the cost of ships and the cost of navigation, and by so doing proved onerous to the pursuit in which he and others were engaged. To be just in the pursuit of that policy, the Legislature had extended to navigation certain protections — *Ib.*

189. — the British ship-owner, burdened as he was already, was told, "You must carry on trade in free competition with a nation the least heavily taxed in the world, or you must give up navigation altogether." — *Ib.*

190. The laws of Great Britain prevented the ship-owner from provisioning his vessel with foreign grain. Such grain was stored in British warehouses, but the ship-owner was prevented from taking it out by the protection which the Legislature thought fit to give to the agricultural interest. He did not blame the Legislature for giving to the agricultural interest that protection. It was, in his opinion, wise to do so; for when he claimed protection for the interest with which he was himself personally connected, he could not be *hear.*) — *Ib.*

191. This, he contended, was a gross act of injustice

puts shackles on the right;" and this is called *reciprocity* and *protection*.

A. If the ship-owner was *the only* man that paid taxes, there might be some sense in this. But suppose the case that *all* men are over-taxed;—is there any reason why two other over-taxed British traders should be robbed of sixpence each, to give a shilling to the over-taxed ship-owner, with a loss of sixpence to the over-taxed consumer besides?

A. Why should any man be so absurd as to ask the public to give him one robbery and waste, as a set-off against another robbery and waste? Why does he not go to the source, and say, "Stop the robbery and waste that is practised on *me*?" The landlords exercise a huge robbery upon the public, the ship-owner included. Instead of protesting against this, "Give me another huge robbery," says the ship-owner, "in common justice." And so the public is to be robbed by both.

so absurd as to deny it to others. (*Hear,*

A. There can be no end of this, till the public have penetrated the fraud

to the British ship-owner ; you not only took away from him the protection which you granted to every other class of the community, but by so doing you inflicted upon him an exclusive burden.—*Id.*

and the duplicate loss to the public as before. And so the public is to be robbed round and round, and is in fact to form itself into one great combination for throwing the greatest practicable quantity of every man's wealth into the sea. Every man is to gain sixpence by the loss of a shilling to other people ; and so the nation is to gain the loss of the sixpences all round.

192. Sure he was, that sooner or later the conviction which he had just stated, in the briefest terms which he could use, would force itself on the attention of Parliament, or, if not, that British navigation would sink into utter ruin.—*Id.*

193. *Journal des Débats*, 9 June 1834.—Our intention is to examine one by one the principal declarations of opinion which the new Custom-house Law has brought into contrast. We have already given our sentiments upon the Petition of the vine-growers of Bordeaux, by showing that the incompatibility of interests between the north and south of France, reduces itself to an opposition that exists between the interests of the vineyards of the Gironde, and the interests of all the rest of the kingdom.

and mystery of these mutual protections. One class of traders is to have a bonus given to it, at an equal loss to some other set or sets of traders, and a loss of the same amount over again to the consumers who are the public besides. And then these other traders are to have a bonus in turn, at the expense of some others,

A. What will force itself on the attention of the British Parliament, when the people at large take the matter up if not before, will be the necessity of putting down *all* robbers, beginning with the greatest, and leaving them to comfort themselves as well as they are able, by the relief arising to them from the removal of each other's mutual injuries.

A. The false statement of an enemy too ignorant to know either the position or the weakness of his own fallacy. The vine-growers of Bordeaux said, that forcing them to give a hundred francs to an iron-master in the north of France which they might have saved by buying the iron from England with French produce, was a loss of a hundred francs to them, and a loss of a hundred francs over again to those other French producers of some kind or other, with whom they must have expended the hundred francs if they had been let alone. So that here was two hundred francs taken from France at large, in order that the iron-master in the north might pocket one hundred of it. And they further said, that the prevention

of the sale of their wine abroad, as for instance in England, which was the effect of retaliatory duties laid on or not taken off, was the loss of perhaps another hundred francs to the people of Bordeaux ; so that the ingenuity of the Government robbed France of three hundred francs, to give one hundred to the iron-master for whom it creates the job, and throw two hundred into the sea ; and so on as often as a similar process is repeated. Of all this the Minister and his organs appear utterly unconscious ; and people even begin to suspect they are incapable of understanding the terms. And so France is to be robbed, at the discretion of any man who can put on a certain coat.

194. The productions of France, as is well known, are divided into two opposing hosts. On one side, the small number of those which have the double advantage in price and quality, of being able to brave all competition not only in their own country but in all the markets of the world ; at the head of which stand wines and silks. On the other, the great mass of agricultural and manufacturing labour, which either very heavy taxes or imperfection in their own processes place under a certain disadvantage with respect to foreign goods of the same kind ; in the midst of which are conspicuous, corn, iron, cotton goods.—*Ib.*

195. The subject of the contest, is the restriction placed on foreign importation by the Customs. The descriptions of industry which form the latter class, declare that if the restriction is taken away, their French market is gone, and their ruin is inevitable. The wine and silk-men on the other side declare, that if it is kept up, they must speedily fall under the weight of their own over-production ; for they

A. The true statement would be this. The productions of France are divided into those which it is the interest of France to make at home, and those which it is her interest not to make at home, but to procure from other quarters by the exchange of goods of the other class. The makers of the goods which it is the interest of France not to make, get possession of the Chamber of Deputies, with a Minister at their head, and then vote that France shall pay them for the goods she does not want from them, at double the price she could get them elsewhere, and lose the difference as distinctly as if it was voted to be thrown into the sea. This is the project of the "*conquering*" M. Thiers.

A. The true statement is, that it is drivelling foolery for France to buy at the dear market what she could buy at the cheap, and take two hundred francs from her own citizens for the sake of giving one hundred of it to a favoured class who have contrived, through the contemptible state of the election laws, to introduce themselves into the Chamber of Deputies ; and that Europe is standing by and laughing, to see whether France will submit to this foolery or not.

produce a great deal more than can be consumed in France, and the foreigner can only buy in proportion as he is allowed to sell.—*Ib.*

196. Now there are three ways of settling this question. One is, as certain political economists would recommend, to proclaim unlimited liberty of exchange, without caring what is to become of the branches of trade that have not constitutions strong enough to bear such diet. Another is, as the Legislature has been trying to do these twenty years, to oblige both parties, by a forced accommodation, to give up the exaggerated part of their respective claims. And lastly, which would be infinitely better for both parties and the country than either, to contrive to give entire satisfaction to the latter party, without the smallest infringement of the securities in possession of the other. This last is the part which it was reserved for the Address of the merchants of Bordeaux to undertake to play.—*Ib.*

197. As long as these questions are not answered with respect to corn, and the corresponding questions with respect to the other kinds of French produce which are protected by duties, we can see nothing but a chimæra in the promise made to agriculture of having at once both a sufficient

compensation and an increased sale.—*Ib.*

198. The Address offers to the manufacturers of France three compensations for the harm that may be done to them by foreign manufactures,—a smaller expense upon their workmen; a cheaper market for buying their tools; and the opportunity of engaging their ca-

A. The merchants of Bordeaux went in no such simpletons' way to work. They said, that to take from them two hundred francs to give a hundred of it to a man in the north and throw away the rest, was a knavery which as Frenchmen they could not submit to. And, like sensible men, they did their utmost to show the various ways in which the gradual abolition of the general fraud would diminish the suffering to the robbers of the public; and proposed that time should be allowed them for the change besides. Out of this is made the insipid piece of sarcasm attempted by the *Journal des Débats*.

A. The question never was, whether the people who plunder France might find it altogether convenient to give up their wrong; but whether it was possible for France to submit to the disgrace of being so plundered on the whole.

A. The substantial question is, whether France is to be robbed of two hundred francs to give one hundred of it to the pets of the Minister. The effort of the insidious Minister is to transfer the inquiry, to whether the alteration may be perfectly agreeable to his pets.

If it is asked seriously to what

pitals in other branches of trade. Here, as before, we shall ask *what* will be the reduction in the wages of their workmen; *what* will be the reduction in the cost of tools and machines;..... and we shall request to be informed with precision and at full length, *what* are the branches of trade to which

the capitals are to be transferred.—*Ib.*

199. The same page tells us that the changes proposed, instead of injuring the revenue, will bring it an abundant harvest of receipts. Increased imports will necessarily create more work, more consumption, more taxes; Pactolus is on the other side, among the foreigners, and waits for nothing but opening the frontiers, to enter France and cover it with its rills.—*Ib.*

200. But happily the Minister of Finance is something else besides Minister of the Customs; and he will always find out, that the impoverishment of internal industry will take from him by dozens, the millions which foreign importation is to bring in to him by units.—*Ib.*

201. Let us get to the end by saying, that the Address of the merchants of Bordeaux fulfils none of the conditions which it announces; that under the expectation of something new, it has done nothing but rub up old ar-

branches of trade capital is to be transferred,—clearly to the honest trades which are to be bettered by the demolition of the dishonest. Put the case that the same question was asked by a highwayman. Would not this be the answer?

A. The man who will submit to being robbed of two hundred francs to give one hundred of it to another, on the pretence that the Minister has contrived to attach to it the collection of a revenue, is a fool courting his own wrong. *Is Pactolus in this?* Here is the Pactolus of M. Thiers.

A. The great and gross fraud is in affirming, that internal industry is to be impoverished, by doing away the system of taking two hundred francs from the industrious to give back one. It lies in the concealment of the fact, that all that would be saved by the consumer of the cheap goods in the price, would be laid out upon French industry of some kind as much as if it was given to the fraudulent iron-masters; over and above the increased enjoyment of the consumer.

A. Try M. Thiers with this;—Ask him if he has ever disproved, that the hundred francs which the man of the south is made to throw away needlessly on iron, would have been just as much expended on some kind of French industry if it had been left with the honest owner, and the honest

guments a hundred times answered; in fact, that it has not moved a step towards the settlement of the high and difficult question which is going on between the branches of trade whose position is secured, and those who have it yet to conquer.—*Ib.*

owner have gained a hundred francs' worth of difference besides. Push him with this. He must answer; for by the last word quoted, the bantling in the *Journal des Débats* is his own.

202. RIBBON TRADE. *Morning Post*. House of Lords. 18th June, 1834. —The petitions which he was about to present were so very numerous signed, described with so much force and truth the unmerited sufferings of such a large portion of the community, and involved considerations of such vast national importance, that he could not content himself with &c.

A. What are their unmerited sufferings? Not being able to sell what people do not want from them. There is no doubt that a man may suffer by this, and that the suffering may be unmerited so far as that means being not brought on by his wilful act; and so does a man suffer from being the owner of a bad piece of land instead of a good one, or a blind fiddler from not being able to play like Paganini. But the question is whether this creates a right to rob the public to make up the difference;—whether it is ground for a motion that the man

be paid for a good crop instead of a bad one, or the fiddler take Paganini's wages by force, for the express reason that nobody will give them without.

203. They complained of the great and intolerable distress into which that trade had fallen, and they attributed it to the overwhelming importation, legal and illegal, of French ribbons into the British dominions. The petitioners believed that the only remedy to this evil was prohibition.—*Ib.*

A. The statement then, of the petitioners is this. They state that they cannot make cheap ribbons, and that somebody else can. Their request, therefore, is, first, that a stop may be put to that portion of British trade and manufactures, which now goes abroad to procure ribbons for the consumer at the cheaper price; secondly, that a stop may further be put to that portion of British trade and manufactures which is now set in motion by the expenditure of the

difference of price by the consumer; and lastly, that the consumer may be robbed of the difference of price, or made to surrender it without receiving anything in return. So that their prayer is, that without a fragment of gain to British com-

merce in the aggregate to balance it, the consumer may be robbed;—that the difference of price in question may be given once to them, and lost twice over by somebody else. The public that would bear such a proposal, must be in a state of idiocy. Even the House of Lords is obliged to huddle up a negative without a division.

204. And yet we talked of competition, and called for bricks when straw wherewith to make them was denied. Competition indeed! Of the impossibility of any thing like fair competition between the English and French ribbon-manufacturers, Dr. Bowring was again his witness.—*Ib.*

“Let us by all means pay the men, because they cannot compete.” The blunder, the noodleism, is in fancying that any good is done to English or to French trade in the aggregate, by heroically resolving to purchase the dear article instead of the cheap; the fact being that on either side, the employment to trade (excluding all notice of the consumer) is just the same in the aggregate in either case, and the loss to the consumer stands out a pure unbalanced loss and stupid tyranny, as much as if he was forced to pay *two* sous for being shaved with a blunt razor, instead of *one* with a sharp.

205. He thought that the difference was in no point more plainly shown than in the disregard which had been manifested towards the adoption of any one of the safe and ingenious plans for the suppression of smuggling in foreign silks which were suggested in evidence before the House of Commons.—*Ib.*

206. And for whom, or for what, had these vast

A. If they cannot compete, then the rational inference is, that they must give over. “We cannot compete; therefore pay us because we cannot compete;”—this is the demand put forward. The facts are plain enough; there are things in which the English cannot compete with the French, and things in which the French cannot compete with the English; whereupon stand up the noodles on both sides of the water, and say,

A. Can he not discern, that the Government is met by the opinion everywhere gaining ground, that smuggling is the natural way of letting down an enormous wrong; that the smuggler is in fact a meritorious member of society, toiling, and with considerable risk, in neutralizing the absurdity of governments, and saving thousands upon thousands annually to the community?

A. This is mere clap-trap, founded on misrepresentation or mistake. The

sacrifices of human happiness been made? The question of *cui bono* forced itself on every man's mind. If indeed it could be shown that out of the ruins of Coventry other cities and towns were likely to rise into eminence and prosperity—if other parts and places of the empire were to be made richer or happier by her passing away from the map of England—it might then become their duty, however painful and severe, to leave her to her fate, and to make no efforts to save her. But in the case before them, it was not a portion of their own

fellow-subjects whom they were called upon to sacrifice for the sake of bettering the condition of the remainder. The only party which could by any possibility be benefited, neither belonged nor were connected with us; and he could not understand why, he would not say Coventry, but the meanest village in the empire, should be doomed to destruction, merely that a French town should rise triumphantly on its ruins. This might be called illiberality; but he was no professor of that liberalism which would take the very life-blood of tens of thousands of our industrious population at home to pamper the prosperity of competitors and rivals abroad.—*Ib.*

207. Were they able to demonstrate that a greater amount of advantage had arisen to the empire at large than the amount of evil and of suffering which had been inflicted on the trade whose existence he was endeavouring to defend?—*Ib.*

argument never was, that the thing is to do good to France. The argument was, that England is not to commit the folly of putting down one portion of her industry to serve another portion of it to an equal amount and no more, and with a national loss through the consumers, who are as deserving people as anybody else, besides. If the mover is sincere, he is answered upon his own terms. It is precisely because the interests of a *greater* portion of their fellow-subjects are not to be sacrificed to serve the men of Coventry, that the men of Coventry must continue as they are.

A. Decidedly they are. By ceasing to pay the petitioners for what they cannot make, the petitioners lose, first, the expenditure on them of the foreign price,—secondly, the expenditure on them of the difference between the foreign price and theirs. *Per contrà*, the expenditure of the foreign price will be gained by the dealers in the goods with which the foreign ware will be purchased; and the expenditure of the difference between the foreign and the petitioners' price, will be gained by the dealers with whom it is laid out by the consumer of ribbons in consequence of his not being obliged to give it to the petitioners for nothing. Balance of the account with British trade and manufactures in the

aggregate (exclusive of the consumer), *Nil*. Remains then, that in one case the consumer pays the difference and gets nothing for it, and in the other he gets value in whatever he chuses to lay it out upon. "*Total of the whole*," a national loss, in the first case, of the difference.

208. There was no reason why one trade should be protected and another left to destruction. If the principle were worth anything, what was good for one was good for all.—*Ib*.

209. They had heard a great deal of free trade in other countries, but, in his opinion, there was no such thing as free trade at all. The object of every country in the arrangement of its commercial system was the very laudable one of protecting its peculiar manufactures; and, in his opinion, it was the duty of Government to watch the progress of those manufactures, and so to alter the rate of duties from time to time as to give protection to the manufacturers.—*Ib*.

210. He thought that the documents which he had read to the House had proved a case of grievous wrong.—*Ib*.

211. He was content to leave the remedy in their Lordships' hands, more particularly in the hands of those who thought, as he did, that the question involved higher, because moral, considerations; that it

A. That is sure enough. Will the mover join in procuring the general application? If not, he must not quarrel with other people for creeping where they cannot walk.

A. The noble reasoner would soon understand the question better, if it were a matter of pipe-clay. The opinion he has to combat is, that the attempt in any country to what is called "protect its peculiar manufactures," instead of being anything "laudable," is a hoax, a fraud, a blunder, a piece of stupidity;—that it means courting a national loss through the consumers, without a shadow of gain to the national trade and commerce in the aggregate to set off against it;—that it is like trying to increase the strength of an army by drafting men from one battalion to another, and leaving half of them in ditches by the way.

A. The terrible wrong, of a man's not being allowed to make other people buy of him what they do not want! But the world knows the bearings of this question.

A. What moral consideration is there, in giving work to men that *cannot* make the thing wanted, by taking it out of the mouths of those who *can*? Or is the moral consideration increased by the fact, that after this process has been consummated, a

was not a mere matter of pounds, shillings, and pence; but that it turned upon the principle that the more widely they threw open the paths of honest industry to their population, the more effectually they closed the avenues which led to guilt and crime.—*Ib.*

212. RIBBON TRADE.—*Morning Post.* House of Commons. June 20, 1834. —What he intended to do was to promote the general interests without sacrificing in the least any particular interest.

213. By giving the particular protection he required, no interest would be injured, whilst one—the interest of those engaged in the manufacture of ribbons—would be materially benefited.—*Ib.*

214. The only possible means by which these unfortunate people could be relieved from their distress consisted in what he meant to propose.—*Ib.*

away by the road. This is one way. But another way would be, to let the community at large buy food; and then the ribbon-weavers, if not instantly, yet by as quick a process as is practicable, would be in part absorbed and the rest relieved. There will always be *some* ribbon-weaving that can be better done at home than abroad. Remember, too, that this process would have taken place gradually in time past, if it had not been prevented by the system of cockering up the useless trades by prohibitions.

servant girl will be found to have been robbed in her ribbons besides? There may be no ill-intent; but the whole is a blunder, a thick-headedness, in not perceiving that not an atom is done towards opening the paths of honest industry in the aggregate, but on the contrary the industry of servant girls is robbed.

A. What he intended to do, was to take from some other trade or trades an amount exactly equal to what he wants to give to the maker of ribbons, and to saddle the community in the persons of the wearers of ribbons, with a gratuitous loss equal to the difference of price besides.

A. "No interest would be injured," means no interest that can be got to bawl all together. Raise a sum for the ribbon-weavers, by taking double the amount from somebody else; only take care that the loss is divided among a greater number, and then the weavers will be easiest collected to make a noise.

A. There are two or three very possible ways. If it can be proved they want it as charity, give them 50,000*l.* But do not do it by a course so superhumanly unreasonable, as giving them 50,000*l.* through the process of taking 100,000*l.* from somebody else and throwing half of it

215. In all things relative to this trade the foreigner had an advantage over us.—*Ib.*

A. The very reason why we should not be such fools as to make the things at home.

216. Was it reasonable or just, he would ask, to keep up the necessities of life while the manufactures of the country were in a state of such lamentable depression?—*Ib.*

A. Who said it was? But because the suffering people of England are robbed out of one pocket, will it mend their case to be robbed out of the other?

217. The prices of the necessities of life should, he contended, be either so reduced as to enable the manufacturers of this country to compete with the foreign manufacture, or else prohibitory laws should be passed by which both parties could enter the home market upon an equal footing.—*Ib.*

A. "Either the public should cease to be robbed out of one pocket, or else it should be robbed out of two, with a view to their entering the home market upon an equal footing." This is the argument.

218. For his part, he could not conceive how free trade could be beneficial to any country; and he thought that it was the duty of every Government to attend to the interests of their own trade and commerce before those of any other country.—*Ib.*

A. The answer is, that Governments by the plan proposed *do not* add one atom to the trade and commerce of their own country; and rob the consumers, among whom the trading and commercial people are included, for love besides.

(Discontinued in June 1836, in consequence of the writer's leaving town.)

THE END.



